

# **The Impact of Customer Engagement on Performance in Nigeria Mobile Telecoms Industry**

**Anthony Osakpamwan Agbonasevbaefe**

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## **Dedication**

This Doctoral thesis is dedicated to the Almighty God, my wife Nneka, my son David and my Late Father, Mr Anthony Osayande Agbonasevbaefe.

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I give thanks to God for this opportunity and the strength He gave me all through the period of this study.

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## **Abstract**

Customer engagement is a core organisational process that concentrates on establishing, maintaining, and enhancing long-term associations with customers. Globally, the mobile telecoms industry is a high customer centric industry, notwithstanding the complexities of relationship affiliations existing between competing firms in the industry in developing economies.

The potential relationship drivers include trust, involvement and commitment. Most previous studies of customer engagement in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria have failed to provide a theoretical and practical justification that explains the firm's relationship from the customer's perspective. This study aims to provide an account of the realities of customer experiences and build on interpersonal relationship that prior relational theoretical findings have yet to frame.

A mixed method approach involving the use of qualitative and quantitative techniques in sequence was used for this study. A semi-structured interview of 15 senior, middle and frontline executives from the four major mobile telecoms companies in Nigeria was done. A survey of 220 customers was also carried out by means of a self-administered questionnaire using a convenience sampling technique. The qualitative data was transcribed; themes analysed and developed using the NVivo software. The quantitative data was analysed on SPSS software.

The findings show a very high rate of growth of subscription for mobile telephony services. It also suggests that multiple stages of customer engagement do indeed exist; customer complaints had no real effects on the overall business performance. It also revealed low level of commitment of the mobile telecoms' firms in achieving deeper customer relationship. This dive in depth is a consequence of distortions and variance in agreements. The level of engagement between the mobile telecoms companies and customers were seen to be promoted from customer evaluation of their actions and experiences. It also shows that the extent of the consumer experience is dependent upon the quality of the formed relationship and its sustainment.

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## **Chapter One - Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Customer engagement has evolved into series of dogmas and character which supposes and defines the original objective and purpose of business set up (Haanu et al. 2013). Customer engagement as a core organisational operation concentrates on constituting, maintaining, enhancing not just medium-term association but creates a conduit for erection of accessible feelings, entrance of existing and new customers (Jayachandran, Sharma, Kaufman, & Raman, 2005; Roos, Friman, & Edvardsson, 2009; Verhoef, 2003).

Previous research lay credence to customer engagement as a major contributor to repurchase and customer attraction. (Izquierdo, Cillan, & Gutierrez, 2005; Rigby, Reichheld, & Scheffer, 2002) and business performance (Javalgi, Martin, & Young, 2006; Kamakura, Mittal, Rosa, & Mazzon, 2002). In the mobile phone market, Customer engagement has become an important phenomenon since as the industry has witnessed momentous growth, change, and competition both globally and domestically.

Nigeria has Africa's biggest mobile market, with more than 173 million subscribers (NCC, 2019). This accelerated growth in the industry has brought about several challenges bothering on network congestion, maintenance of standards and delivery of efficient customer services. The Nigerian mobile telecom market has four major players remains the most competitive in the African continent. However, studies suggest that the industry is faced with fundamental weaknesses. These includes network traffic, and infrastructure problems which are critical issues responsible for most of the negative perception in the market and apparent discontent and lack of confidence among consumers (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014).

At the same time, in most situations, many managers are unable to address this fact directly, although they are striving to learn the reason for this loss of trust (Cannie and Caplin 1991). These mobile operators cannot therefore afford to lose present and future customers; as such loss would lead to loss of sales and profits, and eventually business failure. Considering the disparity between client acquisition and long-term connection in the mobile industry, the problem of client commitment has been addressed from various angles such as economic, behavioural, and psychological.

The significance of customer engagement in the sustenance of a business cannot be over emphasized because customer engagement theory was based on the fundamental principles that business organisation needs to fully comprehend the needs and wants of them with a view to satisfactory service that enhance performance and business profitability (Choudhury,2014).

The first chapter is organised as follows. The first section will briefly introduce the theoretical background of the study and will elucidate the customer engagement concept. The second section will provide the justification for the research, research objectives, research questions and approach. The third part will highlight the structure of the thesis and a summary of the chapter.

## **1.2 Theoretical background of study**

Efficient servicing of customers has continued to influence the marketing decision making strategies of business organisations. These strategies have evolved over the years (Haanu et al., 2013). Past research in the literature shows that deceit competition from rivals are prevented and eliminated when customers become loyal. This loyalty promotes shareholder value. Several observations and proposition have been presented as an answer to the well-being of relationship between a supplier and a consumer both in a business to business relationship or business to consumer association. (Low & Johnston, 2006).

Notwithstanding the insights gained from such association there exist a barrier to the connections between businesses and their customers. These impediments have engendered attention about the exact correlation between company performance and relationship with customers (Dwyer et al. 2007). Effort has been made to elaborate, represent and develop the viewpoints and customer engagement prospects based on evidence of experience by customers within the sphere of relationships whose constructs have not been adequately defined.

The debate however reflects the continuous presence of such past experiences preventing the quick development of good customer engagement practices in a modern society. (Barry and Terry, 2008). The discussion in the literature has also examined the critical curve and intersection between consumers and businesses with the passage of time. Studies show a continuous shift in the relationship cycle. These

changes occur at different stages with other relational constructs remaining constant and stable. (Mcintosh, 2007). The empirical evidence also reveals an evolution and presence of additive experience to their yearning and well-being (Barry and Terry, 2008).

Practitioners argue that customer engagement is used by firms to sustain competitive advantage. In theory, this is seen as a technique for enhancement of the connection in a seller-buyer relationship (Lacoste & Johnsen, 2015). This is because customers are deemed to be a true asset for companies, most of whom face elevated consumer-based losses. Marketing experts and business managers agree that collective relationship between a business and its customer produce competitive advantage (Barry & Terry, 2008). In this regard, the potential relationship drivers include trust (Kruger and Mostert, 2014). satisfaction (Hewett, Money, & Sharma, 2002; Macintosh, 2007), and commitment (Anderson & Weitz, 1992; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

A common goal of customer engagement concerns interpretation of customer sensitivity and realisation of high equity far beyond the transaction. The value placed on the customer is consistent with the return of affection toward the customer by the business organisation. In this line of analysis, Customer engagement leads to a definitive loyalty from the customer and to the development of profitable long-term relationships and discipline (Leone et al., 2006). The building of successful customer relationships is facilitated by firms comprehending how the key drivers of customer engagement affect each other and their influence on performance. These firms acquire and exhibit higher profits while achieving a huge reduction in operational, financial, and marketing costs. (Low & Johnston, 2006).

This study empirically examines variables of customer engagement and relationships and demonstrates how they are interrelated to generate powerful company output. This study's research environment is the Nigerian telecommunications industry. The fast growth of Nigeria's mobile telecommunications services industry meets fierce competition, particularly between businesses that are the industry's main players. Nigeria's mobile carriers have awareness on the significance of a customer centred strategy that delivers profit at minimal business cost. This serves to enhance sustained

and continued push on the market with a view to not just match competitors but surpassing them.

The imperative of this argument is the belief in the industry that at the point of saturation, survival will be based on securing existing customers and not only discovery new customers. The former as a customer engagement practice is a cost effective and profitable strategy. It attracts new customers, keeps them as well as secure old ones to bring about sustained business performance. Wind (1990), explained that firms tends to develop their capability and capacity in propagating, handling and engaging their customers and an understanding of a quicker response to an always changing market environment. The trend is for businesses to gain knowledge of customer engagement practices and focus on keeping their position in very competitive markets.

Kotler and Armstrong, (2011) identified the 3 groups of customers. These are promoters, passives and detractors. Each of the subgroup display different attributes related to their encounters and experiences. The promoters share their nice reflections of a firm. The Passives are typified by their silence while the detractors share their bad taste to the marketplace. Each grouping has its rewards and penalty in product or service marketing. The level of return purchase is proportionate to satisfaction available to a customer. Results from surveys on buyer-seller relationships have shown a low level of commitment in many organisations (Doney and Cannon, 1997). This dive in depth is a consequence of distortions and variance in agreements.

Haanu et al (2013) demonstrated that customer engagement attributes are promoted from customer evaluation of actions and experiences. In the literature, they suggested that consumer desires are met when their expectations are exceeded by performance in service delivery. The extent of a consumer experience is dependent upon the quality of the formed relationship and its sustainment. There is a general belief among scholars that consumer proximity with services is more connected to relationship than goods (Kahn,1998). Essentially, customer engagement is expressed in favour of a disposition to attitude and aggregate responses. The conduct of such attitude is hinged upon an understanding of different variations and attendant attributes to which customer engagement is conceptualized.

In addition, the perception of customer engagement and its power to facilitate and promote the relationship union have attracted much scrutiny from scholars and managers. Findings from less developed countries like Nigeria whose economy is growing show a very high rate of spread in telecoms subscription. Globally, the telecoms industry is a high customer centric industry, notwithstanding the complexities of relationship affiliations existing between competing firms in the industry especially in developing economies ((Olatokun and Ojo, 2014).). Some of the common features from past studies in the mobile telephone industry reveal a concentration of such drivers and attributes like customer orientation, retention and satisfaction. (Parasuraman et al.1985).

### **1.3 Justification for research**

The justification for this study stems from the reality that many studies have been conducted on the Nigeria mobile telecom industry. These studies were conducted on several quantitative kinds of customer engagement practices. There is, however, a lack of qualitative consumer research of the industry's customer engagement procedures. This study contribution lies in its capacity to conduct both a qualitative and quantitative investigation that investigates the experiences of consumer engagement in Nigeria and how it fits into prior literature and theories.

The objective of this study is to explore the customer engagement methods of the telecommunications companies from both the employee and consumer viewpoint. The relevance of customer engagement in business existence, sustainability and prosperity cannot be underestimated because the theory of customer engagement was based on certain basic values that held that companies required to know their consumer needs and would like to serve them satisfactorily and profitably. (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014).

The mobile telecommunications businesses had to embrace fresh approaches to manage their customers using customer engagement strategies to get a big share of the market and wade off competition from rival firms. The businesses have realized that customer engagement as a strategy translates into company enhancement, increased profitability, and current consumers ' retention while also seeping in new customers. It has supplied them with a platform to initiate long-term company

relationships aimed at improving and meeting individual customer requirements and wants. In the past, companies believed that maintaining long-term client relationships was mainly based on consumer awareness driven by their customers engagement schemes (Xu and Walton, 2005). There has now been a shift in thinking and application of strategies by most firms in this regards particularly in the last decade. The role of the customer has now extended been mere buyers of products or services. Customers are now fully engaged in all aspect of company life.

Some prior study has also given operational, theoretical and methodological proof to support more customer engagement frames in advanced business environments by companies (Xu and Walton, 2005; Baksi and Parida, 2012; Wali, et al., 2015). Customer engagement adoption and implementation in the Nigerian mobile telecom industry had been poorly reported in the literature and there is a lack of research on customer engagement practices of mobile telecom firms in Nigeria. In Nigeria, experiences showed that mobile telecoms consumers are poorly managed by firms and this is evidenced in the high rates of switching behaviours (NCC,2014).

The purpose of this research is to provide an empirical foundation for understanding the customer engagement domain in an evolving and developing economy. To accomplish this goal, a framework was created to understand the multiple elements of customer engagement policy and execution through a systematic synthesis of current customer engagement information, and integration of multiple customer experiences. This framework draws on customer engagement in the marketing literature and relationship marketing. There is however a demarcation between these two concepts.

#### **1.4 Background of study**

Prior to the liberalisation of the telecoms industry in 1999, telecommunications services in Nigeria was expensive to acquire, difficult to obtain and expensive to use. There were about 400,000 telephone users. They were using fixed line telephones and it was an insignificant figure for a country with a very large population of nearly 100 million. It was one of the lowest the world (NCC, 2015). The government-owned Nigeria Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) was the sole provider and operator of telecommunication services. In 2001, the industry was deregulated and the Global System for Mobile Communication, (GSM) was introduced to break the monopoly

enjoyed by the state owned NITEL was broken. From about 400,000 fixed wired users, mobile phone subscribers grew to 7 million by 2004 and to 64.16 million in January 2009 with total revenue of US\$8.42 billion (Pyramid research, 2010).

By end of 2010, the Nigeria mobile telecom industry became the fastest growing telecoms market in Africa with over 78 million active subscribers (NCC,2011). South Africa with a total of 43 million subscribers was pushed to the second position. Nigeria`s subscriber base rose further to 173 million by September 2017 (NCC, 2015). This astronomical rise in service users has not been without its challenges both for the mobile phone companies and the customers. The four major mobile phone companies in Nigeria are Globacom, Airtel, MTN and 9mobile. The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) official industry data indicates that the mobile telecoms industry now controls 98.12 per cent of the country`s telecommunications market share (NCC, 2017). Operators in the Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) segment have a paltry 1.74 per cent, while fixed wired/ wireless operators have an abysmal 0.14 per cent of the market.

Poor customer management has resulted to financial penalties from the Nigerian telecommunications commission for the major mobile telecom players (MTN, Glo, 9mobile (formerly Etisalat) and Airtel because of their inability to fulfil minimum quality requirements (NCC, 2014). The NCC is the telecommunications industry regulatory authority in Nigeria. It is an independent body set up on 24 November 1992 by the Nigerian Federal Military Government under Decree No. 75. The NCC is responsible for regulating the provision of telecommunications services and equipment, encouraging competition, and setting telephone service performance norms in Nigeria.

Essentially, the aim of this research is to carry out a study into firms` customer engagement practices on consumers in the mobile telecom industry of Nigeria. The significance of customer engagement to the sustenance and progress of business cannot be overemphasized. Customer engagement theory highlights empirical practices that a business organisation imbibes to understand the needs and wants of their customers to providing quality and satisfactory services (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014). Additionally, in the last decade, strong rivalry and competition by firms has become the norm as each organisation lay down various markers to outbid one

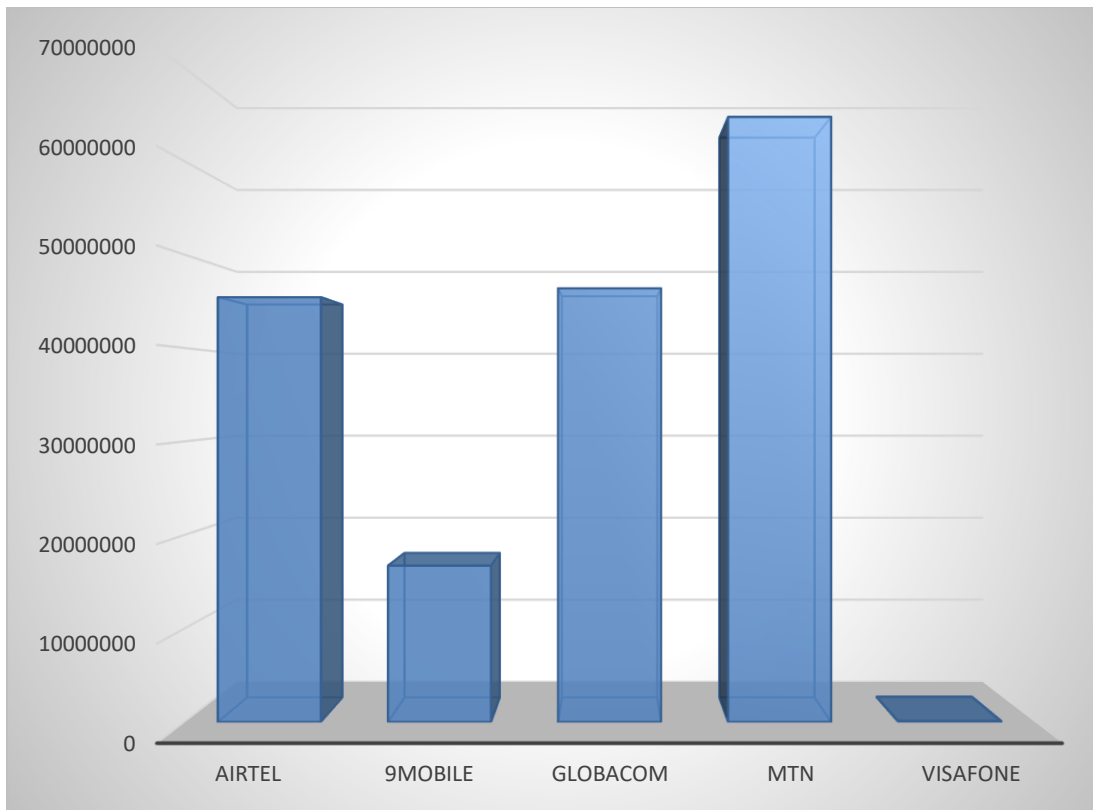


another and gain a large chunk of existing target market and the exploitation of new markets (Mendoza et al. 2010).

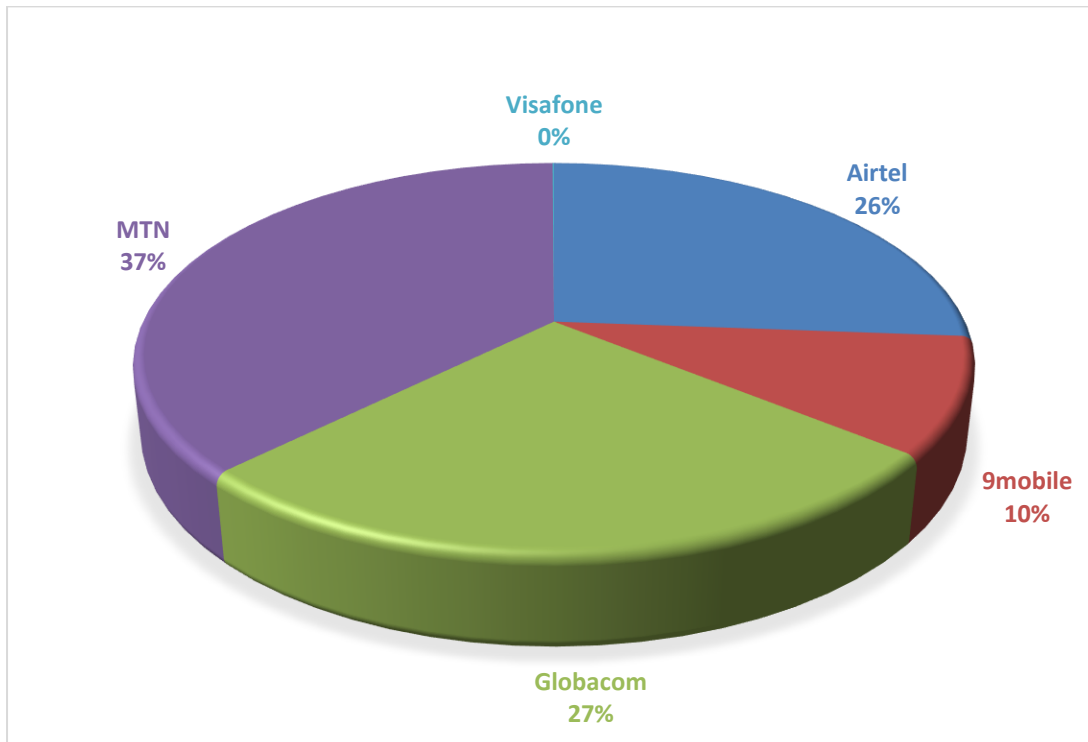
The concept of customer engagement predispose that by adopting long term business relationships with their customers, firms have greater capability in retaining them over a long period while maintaining constant improvement in meeting their needs and wants all through the relationship.(Garrido-Moreno and Padilla-Melendez, 2011; Xu and Walton, 2005). These business relationships stem from understanding consumer perception based on personal and exclusive customer engagement systems (Xu and Walton, 2005).

From the literature, research has shown by operational, theoretical and methodological evidence that the practise of customer engagement was more in developed business environment and firms (Xu and Walton, 2015; Baksi and Parida, 2012; Wali, Wright and Uduma, 2015). In the Nigerian mobile telecom industry, the implementation of customer engagement has been poorly reported in the literature and there is a dearth of research work on customer engagement practices of mobile telecoms firms. Empirical evidence show that mobile telecoms consumers were poorly managed by firms and this is reflected in the high rates of switching behaviours in the industry (NCC, 2018).

The revolution of the mobile telephone industry in Nigeria and the country`s entrance to the Global System for Mobile telecommunications led to the auctioning digital mobile licenses in Nigeria. Two mobile telecoms companies emerged in MTN Nigeria and Econet, (now known as Airtel Nigeria) as the first two operators in the Nigerian market. The industry currently has five licensed firms; MTN Nigeria Communications, Globacom Limited, Airtel Nigeria and 9mobile, formerly (Etisalat Nigeria). The market shares and market leadership of the Nigerian MT operators as at April 2019 is depicted on Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2



**Figure 1.1: Market leadership of Nigeria mobile telecom industry**



**Figure 1.2: Market Share of Nigeria telecom companies**

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 demonstrate the market leadership and shares of operating companies in the Nigerian mobile telecoms industry. The data shows that MTN has the biggest market share of 43 percent making it the market leader, Globacom has 21 percent making it the second biggest operating company in the market, Airtel controls 20 percent of the market making it a market competitor and Etisalat has 16 percent of the market. It is essential to remember, however, that since its liberalization in 1999, MTN has always taken the lead in the industry (NCC Q4 Report, 2018). Similarly, the mobile telecommunications industry in Nigeria is listed among Africa's biggest and fastest mobile telecommunications markets and among the world's ten fastest growing telecommunications markets (BMI, 2018).

Nigerian mobile telecoms customers are regarded as enthusiastic buyers. They use mobile telecom services for social and business purposes. Majority of the consumers use mobile telecom services in communicating with family, friends and relatives. Owing to the challenges of poor network and services in the industry, an estimated 70% of customers are subscribed with more than one mobile telecom firms (NCC, 2014). For most of this consumers, mobile telecom services constitute a significant aspect of their everyday personal, business and social life.

### **1.5 Research Objective**

This research explores customer engagement from a relationship-oriented perspective; the objectives of this research are primarily to;

- Investigate the formation of customer engagement in the mobile telecommunication industry in Nigeria:
- Explore customer relationships as an antecedent for customer engagement formation.
- Determine if the engagement customer's form with their mobile providers affects or predicts the type and level of performance.

### **1.6 Research Question**

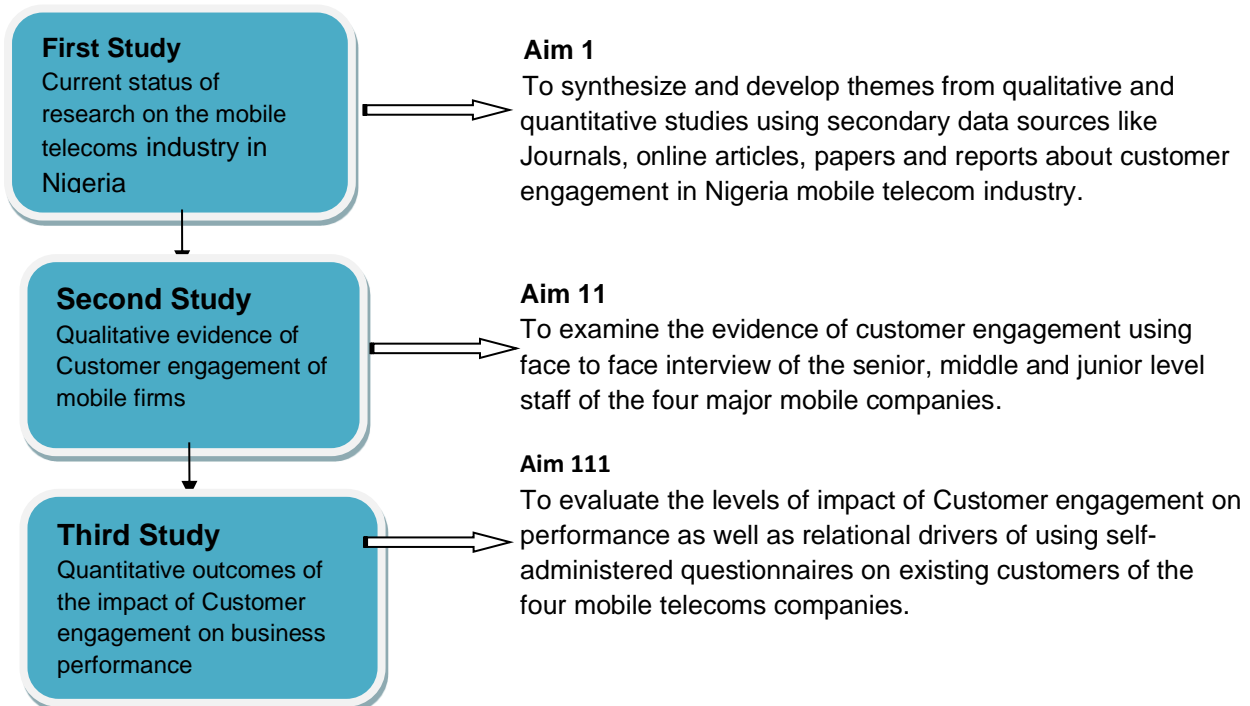
The questions to be answered in this study are:

- What motivates customer engagement by mobile telecoms service providers in Nigeria?

- Can customer engagement serve as an antecedent for business performance in Nigeria telecoms industry?
- Do the relationships formed by Nigerian consumers and their mobile telecoms providers determine the type and level of business performance achieved?

## 1.7 Research Approach

Three separate studies with different goals as shown in Figure 1.3 is proposed to answer the research question.



**Figure 1.3: Flow chart describing the studies titles and objectives**

## 1.8 Structure of the thesis

This research thesis is organised into eight chapters.

### 1.8.1 Chapter One

Chapter one specifically presents the introduction, theoretical background of research, justification of research objective, research questions and the research approach.

### **1.8.2 Chapter Two**

Chapter two presents the research setting of this research. It digs into the political, economic and socio-demographic overview of Nigeria. It also highlights the historical background and development of the Nigerian telecoms industry.

### **1.8.3 Chapter Three**

Chapter three presents the literature review, highlighting the scope of the study and the literature engaged, which includes firms' and customer engagement literature. Furthermore, it expatiates on key theories and definitions of theoretical constructs and review of related empirical studies in the fields of customer engagement from existing literature.

### **1.8.4 Chapter Four**

Chapter four shows the conceptual foundations of the study and presents the conceptual framework upon which underpins this study.

### **1.8.5 Chapter Five**

Chapter five is about the research methodology. It outlines the philosophical foundation of the study looking into the ontological and epistemological issues and further rationalised its choice of qualitative and quantitative research design. Finally, an explanation of the data analysis techniques used and other tools that aided the process of analysing the data is presented.

### **1.8.6 Chapter Six**

Chapter six presents the qualitative data and findings of this study. This chapter is about analysis of interviewees attribute data, primary and secondary data from Nigeria. It also shows discussion of the findings in the light of extant literature. Furthermore, it presents interpretations of key findings from the Nigeria field study using key participants quote whilst incorporating wider literature and how these findings fit into adopted theories.

### **1.8.7 Chapter Seven**

It presents the quantitative data and findings from this study. It highlights comparisons of the findings from field study in Nigeria in the light of the research objectives. This chapter also demonstrate how findings support the qualitative study.

### **1.8.8 Chapter eight**

Chapter eight outlines the conclusions and implications of the research. It shows key theoretical, practical contributions and originality as it relates to customer engagement practices. It outlines the limitations and suggestions for further research.

### **1.9 Summary of chapter**

Chapter one presented the thesis theoretical background and research value. It discussed issues from the Nigerian Mobile telecoms industry using graphs, tables and pie charts as sourced in Nigeria Communications Commission and Ofcom published documents. Additionally, the objectives of the thesis, the research question, research approach were presented. The next chapter will present the context and setting of this study.

## **Chapter Two – Context of Research**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In the past, the political climate in Nigeria was volatile and unstable. The country was bedevilled by countless religious and ethnic unrest, accentuated by uneven levels of social, educational and economic development between the country's southern and northern regions. Nigeria gained independence from Britain fifty-nine years ago, but the country has only had thirty-two years of democratic rule. Much of the political and social obstacles to economic growth and development has been attributed to long years of military dictatorship. Nigeria is a federal republic consisting of thirty-six states, and a federal capital territory, Abuja. It is further separated into Seven hundred and Seventy-four local government authorities. The country runs a presidential federal system with three distinct arms of government; the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary.

### **2.2 Economic Structure of Nigeria**

The economy of Nigeria is split into two groups: the oil the non-oil industry. Analysts submit that the country is a monolithic economy with oil revenues accounting for over 90% of its revenue. Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is extremely associated with petroleum industry developments. In 2003, a rise in global crude prices led to a GDP growth peak of 10.4 percent. Economic growth in Nigeria was motivated by increasing and falling oil prices and fast development in the agricultural industry between 2000 and 2005. Although the oil industry recorded adverse development in the third quarter of 2017 as a result of declining oil production, the non-oil industry grew with significant contributions from the finance, telecommunications, retail and wholesale, agricultural industrys (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Nigeria's actual GDP development from 2016 to 2019 is shown in Figure 2.1 below.

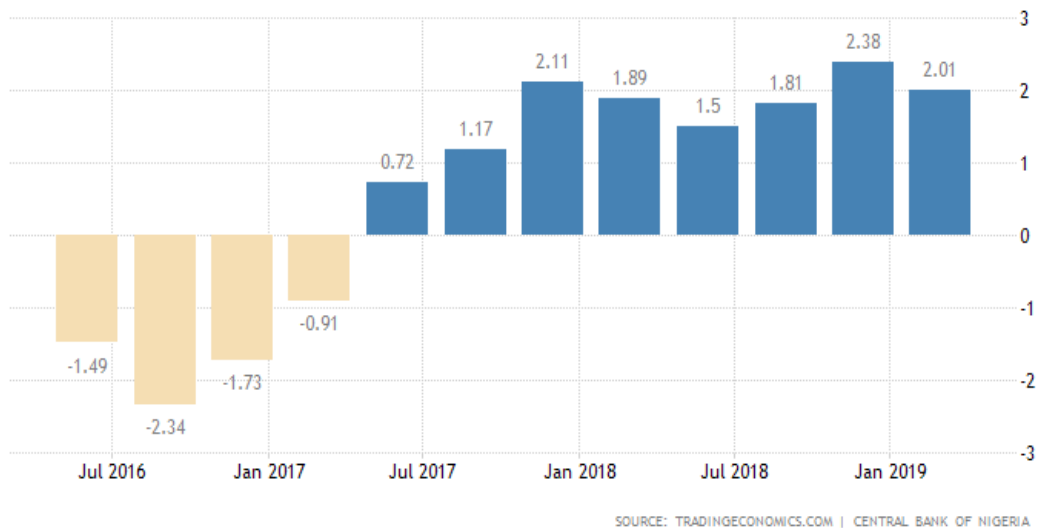


Figure 2.1: Real GDP growth rate in Nigeria (2016-2019)

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

As shown in Figure 2.1 above, The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Nigeria expanded 2.0 % year over year in January 2019, following a growth of 1.8 % in the previous six months. GDP annual growth rate in Nigeria averaged 3.5 from July 2016 to January 2019. The GDP reached an all-time high of 2.38 % in January 2019 and a record low of -0.91 in the first quarter of 2017(National Bureau of Statistics, 2019)

### 2.3 Nigeria Socio-demographic overview

Nigeria has the biggest population in Africa, representing approximately 47% of the total population of West Africa. It ranks as the eighth most populous nation in the globe with over 190 inhabitants. Nigeria has witnessed one of the greatest population growth rates in sun-Saharan over the past 10 years. According to the World bank global report, Nigeria's population was projected to achieve over 200 million by the year 2025, to peak at nearly 300 million by the year 2050. This will make the country sixth most populous nation on earth. Figure 2.2 below shows Nigeria's population between 2010 and 2018.



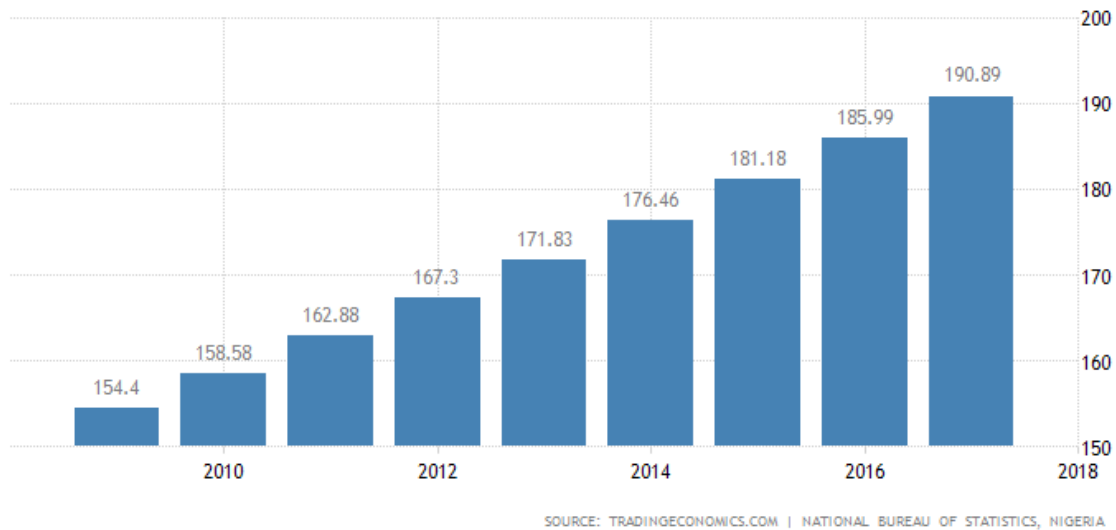


Figure 2.2: Total population in Nigeria, 2010-2018

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

Nigeria's population rose from 158 million in 2010 to 190 million in 2018, as shown in figure 2.2. The average population growth rate for the period, 2010 and 2018 was 2.4%. This is greater than the 1.8% for Ghana and 2% for Cameroon (World bank, 2018). The overall population places Nigeria above African nations like Egypt, Ethiopia with a population of just over 82 and 90 Million respectively.

Nigeria's population is comparatively young and active. According to the National Statistics Bureau (2017) report, 42 percent of Nigeria's population was between the ages of 0-14, while 55 percent of the country's population was between the ages of 15-55 and the remaining 3 percent were over 65. According to Pyramid Research (2018), the total working population is about 39 percent of the total population in Nigeria. The country's workforce is shown in the figure below.

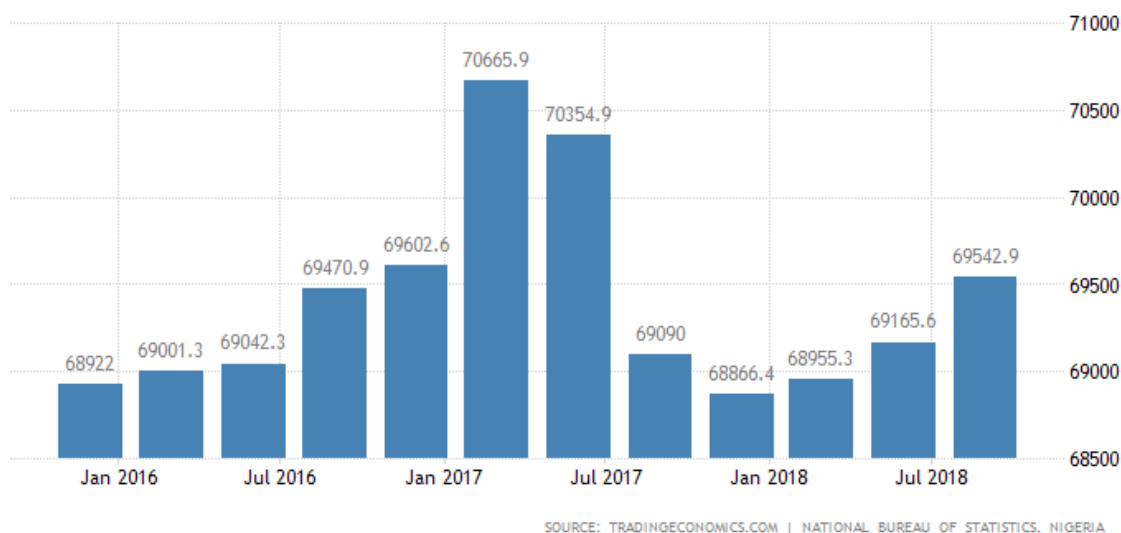


Figure 2.3: Total working population in Nigeria, 2016 -2018

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, 2018.

The total working population increased from 68 million in 2016 to 68 million in 2018, as shown in Figure 2.3. This figure indicates Nigeria's population is big and young (National Statistics Bureau, 2018). In the Nigerian population, the distribution of gender is comparatively even. According to the National Statistics Bureau study (2017), there were 71.7 million males (51.2 percent) and 68.3 million women (48.8 percent) in population breakdown by gender. These numbers are based on the 2006 Nigerian domestic census.

## 2.4 Development of telecom industry in Nigeria

The British colonial administration set up the first telecommunications facilities in Nigeria in 1886. The facilities were mainly aimed at discharging colonial administration tasks rather than offering services for the country's socio-economic growth. In 1950, for a population of thirty to thirty-five million individuals, the total telephone lines in Nigeria were estimated to be 15,000 with links to 98 local exchanges. The complete amount of telephone lines in Nigeria had increased to 18,724 for a population of almost 40 million by the moment of its independence in 1960. This resulted in a telephone density of approximately 0.5 telephone lines per 1,000 individuals. There were 121 exchanges in the telephone network, with 116 manual exchanges and the remaining five auto.

Between 1960 and 1985, the telecommunications industry consisted of two divisions; the Post and Telecommunications Department (P&T), a business department of the Ministry of Communications, which began as a postal branch of the British Post Office in 1851. The second was a limited liability company, the Nigerian External Telecommunications (NET) Ltd. created by the British Cables and Wireless company.

In 1985, all telephone exchanges were analogous, whereas the installed switching capacity amounted to approximately 200,000 lines which was less than the anticipated 460,000 lines. This 50% percentage of one-line telephone to over 400 persons grossly inadequate for a developing nation and did not meet the global International Telecommunications Union standard specification of one telephone per 100 persons. During this era, telephone service was characterised by poor quality costly, network congestion and not user friendly to consumers. The telecommunications unit of the postal and telecommunications departments was separated from their postal branch in December 1984. It was combined with the Nigerian External Communications company, NET to form the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited, NITEL and registered as an independent public company.

The installed capacity for NITEL was for over 100 million people comprising of 650,000 telephone lines. The challenge was that only about 50% of these lines were operational owing to network problems. The cause of this anomaly was use of outdated telecoms technology and equipment. The company was a monopoly and since there was no market competition, complacency was high and service delivery was a complete disaster.

## **2.5 Reorganisation of the telecom industry in Nigeria**

The reorganization of the telecommunications industry in Nigeria was stimulated by the government's decision to stop financing public corporations. It was also necessary to overhaul stimulate the growth and development of the Information, communication technology architecture. The purpose was to liberalize the industry and make telecoms services available and affordable for the teeming population. This premise brought about the eventual deregulation and reform of the industry.

In achieving the objectives of privatization and reorganization of the telecommunications industry, the Nigerian government instituted a four-dimensional reform program. This consist of the development of a new telecoms policy; new legal and regulatory framework, establishment of an independent regulatory body, and the privatization of the moribund state-run NITEL. In February 2000, the government Bureau of Enterprises created the Telecoms Industry Reform Panel to draw up and implement the restructuring of the telecommunications industry.

Nigeria Transnational Corporation, Transcorp bought a 51% stake of NITEL at a value of \$500 million dollars in 2006. However, owing to its inability to enhance the fortunes of the company as stipulated in the takeover agreement, the government cancelled the deal with Transcorp. NITEL was sold to a consortium, The New Generation Telecom in 2010. This agreement was also terminated over allegations of corruption and lack of due process in the acquisition.

The government established the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in 1992 and allowed private industry involvement in the provision of telecommunications services (Jerome, 2002). This brought about a partial deregulation of the industry and the end of monopoly in the industry. It also signalled the start of fixed wireless telephone services in the country in 1997, by licensing private (fixed) telephone operators (Ndukwe, 2005). Figure 2.4 shows the organisational structure of the Nigerian telecommunications communication, NCC.

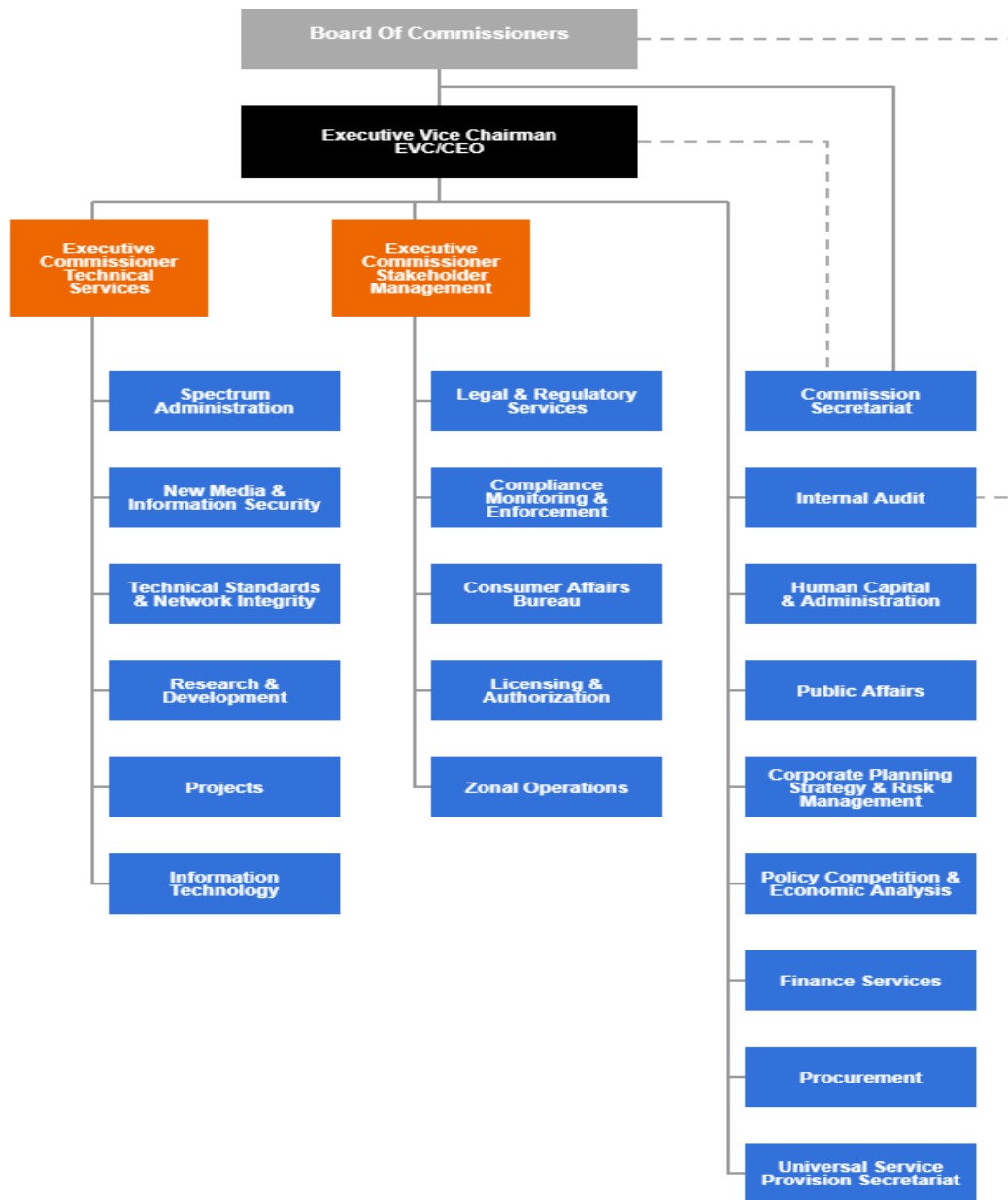


Figure 2.4: Organisational Structure of Nigerian Communications Commission

Source: Nigerian Communications Commission, 2018

The Nigerian Communications Commission began the issuance of licenses to private telecom operators in 1996. Figure 2.5 shows the Market share by the technology of telecommunications activities in Nigeria.

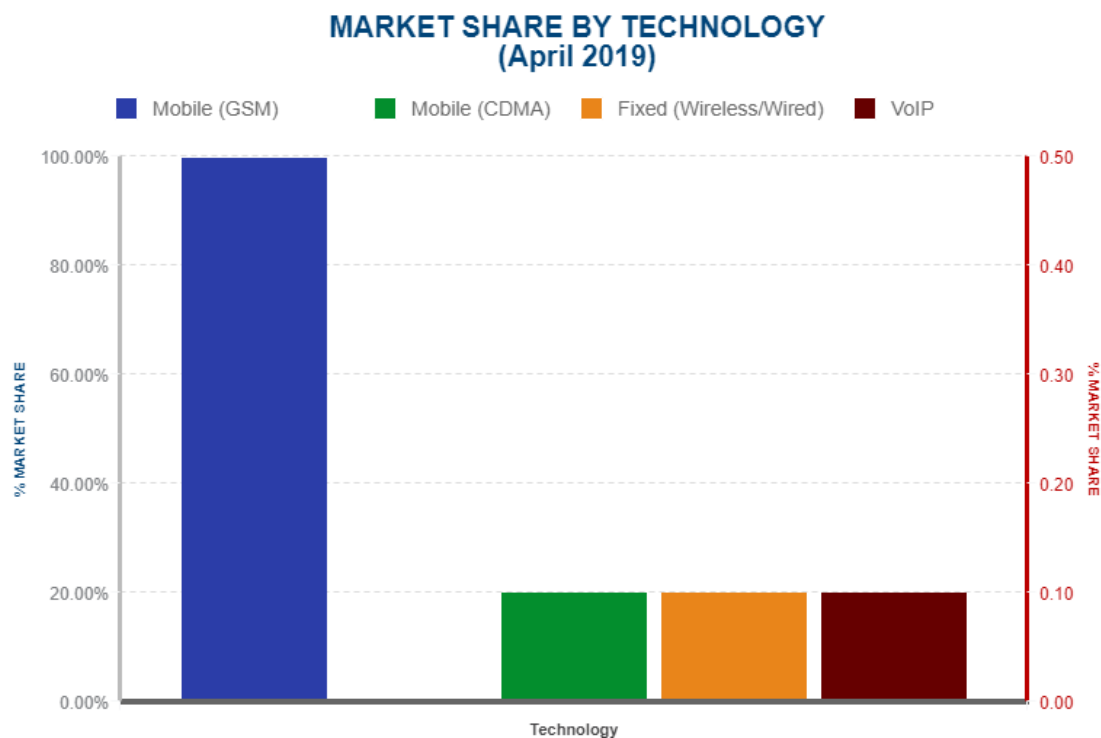


Figure 2.5: Market Share by Technology in Nigeria Telecom

Source: Nigerian Communications Commission.

As shown in Figure 2.5, in February 2001, the NCC granted four companies, Econet Wireless, Mobile Telecommunications Network, MTN, Communications Investment Limited (CIL), and Mobile Telecommunications Limited (Mtel), digital mobile licenses in the 1800 and 900 GSM bands for an original period of 15 years. The permit granted to CIL was withdrawn because it was unable to pay the \$285 million licensing fee within the stipulated time. MTN and Econet began operations and roll out of their services during the second and third quarter of 2001 in Nigeria. In 2002, Glo Mobile joined the fray upon approval its own license.

For a 10-year period in 2006, the NCC introduced a uniformed access service permits with a one-off authorization to provide fixed, mobile and other telecoms products and services in the market. Thirteen firms, inclusive of the already licensed GSM providers were given these permits. The implementation of uniformed access permits access service permits was a significant shift in the telecoms industry. This put an end to the activities of private operators time restricted duration of mobile telecoms services. This uniformed permit access was also extended to the operators

of Code Division Multiple Access, CDMA. This broaden the level of competition in the industry in terms of fixed-line and mobile telephony. The CDMA operators are also expanding their markets into the mobile telephony aspects of the market as part of their diversification .

## 2.6 Expansion of the Telecom Industry in Nigeria

Nigeria's telecommunications industry is experiencing fast transition and explosive development. Within a few years of restructuring the industry, the high levels of competition by private operators has brought significant benefits to subscribers. The telecommunications industry provides telephony products and services for both individual and business customers.

At the end of December 2001, the total subscriber base for connected fixed and mobile lines increased from over 800,000 lines 2001 to nearly 125 million lines by the end of 2011, with an annual growth rate of 125 percent. Overall, by April 2019 (NCC,2019), the complete subscriber base for active lines was 173 million. Nigerian telecommunications industry reform has resulted in a rise in the level of telephone line penetration in the industry. Figure 2.6 below shows the amount of active telephone lines and the rate of phone penetration (teledensity).

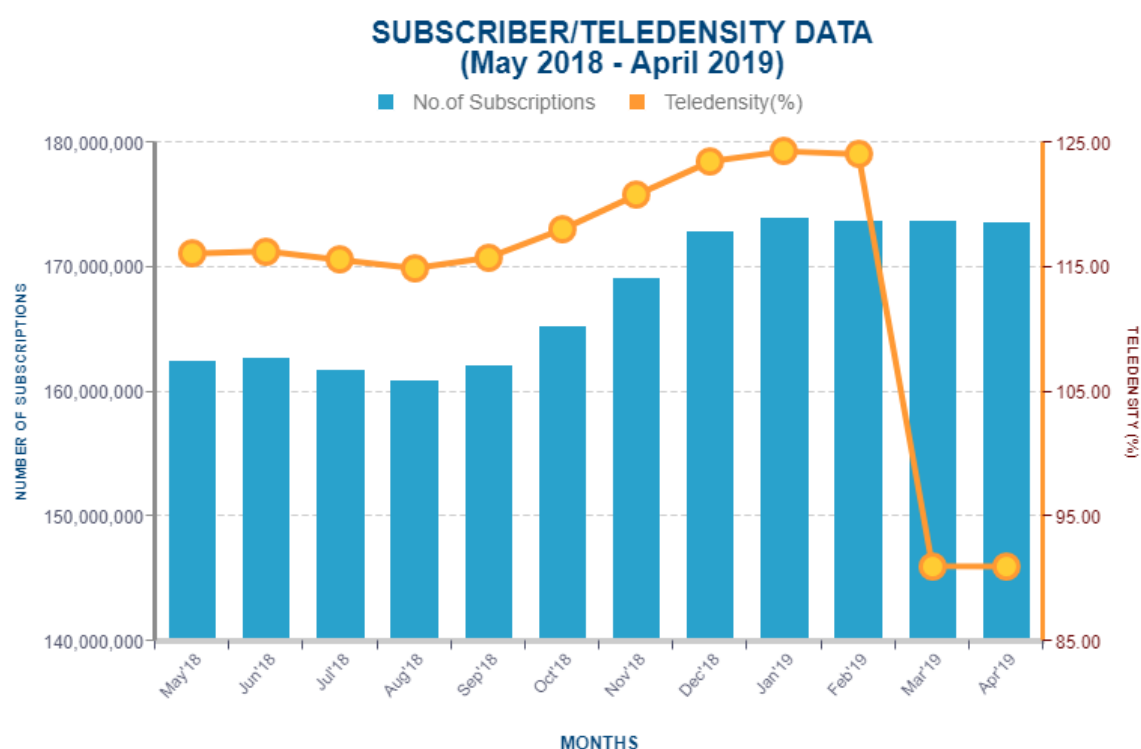


Figure 2.6: Telephone lines and Teledensity in Nigeria (2018-2019)

Source: Nigerian Communication Commission, 2019

The mobile telecom industry has undergone exponential growth since the industry was deregulated. Figure 2.7 shows the market share of the different operators.

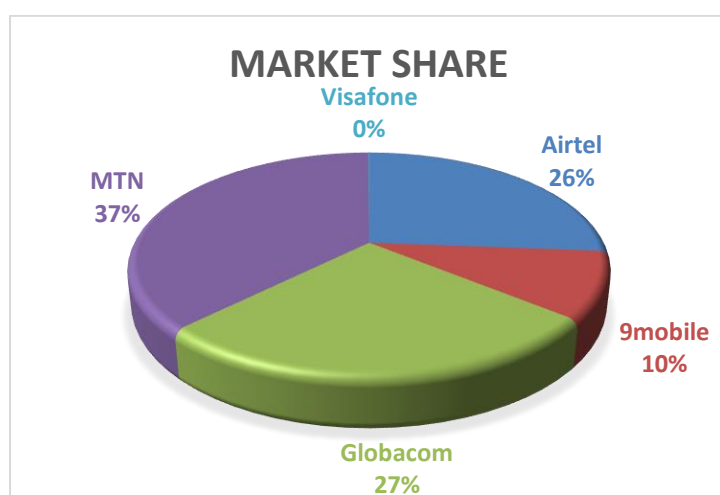


Figure 2.7: Nigeria Mobile telecoms Market Share, April 2019

Source: NCC, 2019

As shown in Figure 2.7, with 37% of total subscription, MTN is the market leader. Globacom has a share of 27%, followed by Airtel with a market share of 26%. Trailing behind is 9mobile, formerly Etisalat Limited with a market share of 19%. Visafone has 0% of the market share. MTN has retained its leading position as the largest private operator in terms of subscriptions by continuously investing in network products and offers. MTN has also introduced a range of value-added services, including mobile television, google MTN, video camera, mobile internet and SIM backup.

After its rebranding exercise in 2008, Airtel overtook Globacom as the second biggest player on the telecommunications industry. A significant contributor to the achievement of Airtel was the implementation of its revolutionary phone initiative. The company was also actively involved in corporate social responsibility and community development projects. The company has special offers and discounts the Nigerian military and other security agencies.



The market share of Globacom rose substantially from 9.3% to 22% between 2003 and 2011. The company achieved this using its highly competitive marketing strategy. It provided and delivered for customers innovative packages ranging from airtime bonuses and low rates charges on roaming. The company was the first to roll out the per-second billing system for customers. The firm also pioneered lower currency recharge cards and the highly successful instalment and monthly pay offers. 9Mobile (formerly Etisalat) had over million customers subscribers a year after the company came on stream. 9Mobile focused on aggressive marketing and promotional programs offering consumers quality products and services.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the telecoms industry contribution to the country's GDP rose from 8 percent to 36.4 percent between 2000 and 2011 (NBS, 2012). The percentage contribution of the industry to national GDP between 2012 and 2019 is presented in Figure 2.8 below.

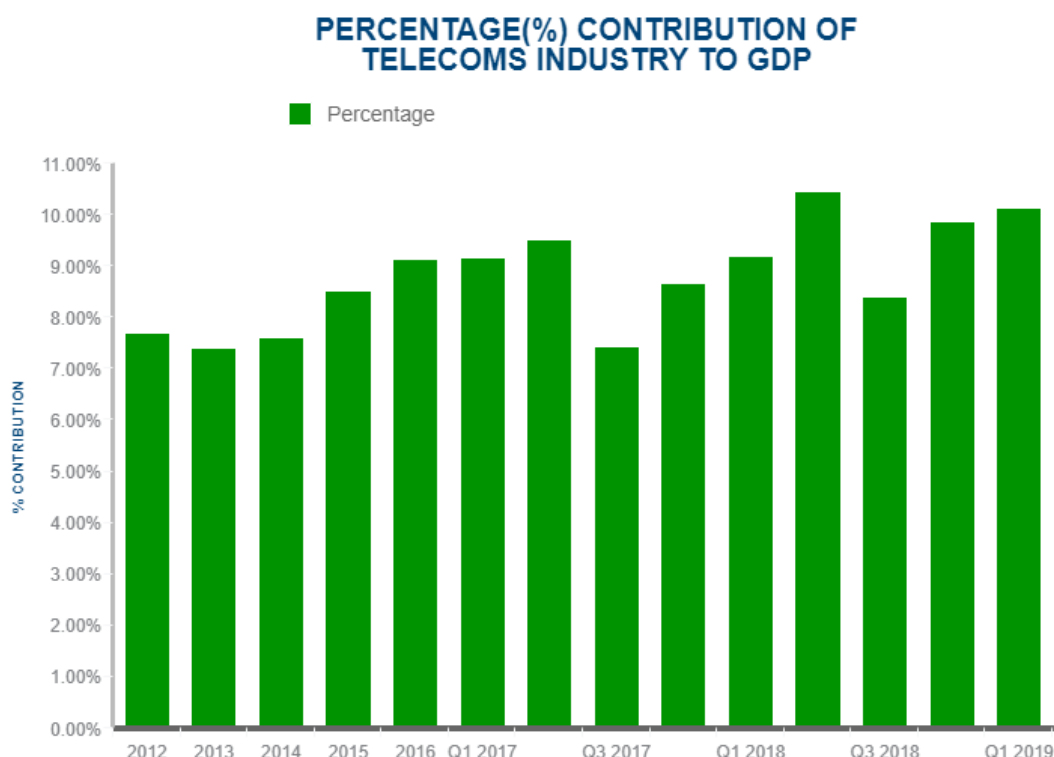


Figure 2.8: Percentage contribution of the telecoms industry to GDP

Source: Nigerian Communications Commission, 2019

## **2.7 Summary of Chapter**

Customer engagement (CE) is that part of marketing knowledge concerned with how organisations create, build, and maintain productive relationships with customers for long term profitability (Ryals and Payne, 2001; Zinkhan, 2004). To manage long-term relationships with customers, it is essential for businesses to identify and nurture a satisfactory, mutually beneficial, continuous relationship (Metcalf et al., 1992; Buttle, 1996). Customer engagement is an important area of study in the field of relationship marketing concerned with keeping customers in the long term (Gronroos, 1997). This has great implications for the mobile phone companies. The customers are considered a real asset, and each of the firms cannot afford the loss of their consumer base in a very highly competitive market.

The mobile phone companies in Nigeria realise the significance of customer engagement as a core marketing strategy for sustained business profitability. To achieve this goal, they focus their marketing instruments to develop and enhance customer engagement by attracting new customers and retaining new ones (Prykop and Heitmann, 2016). Owing to the high level of competition, a considerable number of firms in the mobile phone industry are losing their current customers to one another. This is despite practising different relationship marketing strategies to retain existing customers (Gronroos, 1995; Ravald and Gronroos, 1996; Ranaweera and Prabhu, 2003).

The major mobile network operators in Nigeria, MTN, Airtel, Glo, and 9mobile lose over a third of their subscribers to rival providers (NCC, 2018). At the same time, the firms managers are unable in most situations to address that fact head-on, although they are striving to learn the reason for this loss. Accordingly, these mobile operators cannot afford to lose ground in the battle for current and future customers. Such a loss would, in turn, lead to lost sales and profits, and ultimately the failure of businesses (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Reichheld and Kenny, 1990). In light of the disparity between customer acquisition and retention in the industry, the issue of customer engagement has been approached from different angles as each of the firms embed different customer engagement strategies to stay ahead of rival competition and maintain market share and leadership.

Thus, there is a need to apply a theoretical framework that gives a full picture of customer engagement, including both how the relationship setting is initiated and what potential utility increases the possibility of the customer being involved in the long-term relationship and repeat purchase. In order to provide a complete understanding of why and how customer engagement takes place and sustained, this study investigated the impact of customer engagement in the Nigeria mobile phone industry, the antecedents and its application to providing reasonable long term solutions to customer dissatisfaction and enhancement of firm performance. The next chapter will present a review of literature relevant to the study.

## **Chapter Three – Literature Review**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter highlighted the setting and context of this research. It digs into the political, economic and socio-demographic overview of Nigeria. It also highlights the historical background and development of the Nigerian telecoms industry. This chapter will show the theoretical background of the study. In order to situate this, it will present the background to and review of the literature relevant to this study. Chapter three aims to put the research objectives into perspective by reviewing related literature. This begins by clarifying the focus of this study. Three research areas are identified as the focus of this study: formation of customer engagement, customer relationship, and the different types of engagement that influence business performance. The theoretical root of the customer engagement concept can be seen in these three research areas.

### **3. 2 Background of research**

Both academics and professionals agree that a source of competitive advantage is cooperative buyer-seller relationships (Barry and Terry, 2008; Ulaga and Eggert, 2006). The Customer Engagement idea has created countless identity sets intended exclusively for business purposes (Haanu et al. 2013). Customer engagement is a key organisational process that focuses on creating, retaining and improving long-term customer connections (Jayachandran, Sharma, Kaufman, & Raman, 2005; Roos, et. al, 2009; Verhoef, 2003).

Overall, past studies promote customer engagement leading to increased customer allegiance (Izquierdo, et. al 2005; Rigby et.al, Reichheld, et.al. 2002) and company efficiency (Javalgi, et.al, 2006; Kamakura et.al, 2002). The potential relationship drivers include trust (Bitner, 1995; Schurr & Ozanne, 1985), involvement (Hewett et.al, 2002; Macintosh, 2007), and commitment (Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). A prevalent objective of customer engagement is the knowledge of customers and the long-term realization of the higher value of customers. Following this line of reasoning, customer engagement contributes to customer loyalty that develops in marketing discipline long-term and lucrative interactions (Leone et al., 2006).

It is vital for companies to find out how customer management drivers affect each other and how they impact efficiency in order to establish effective relationships with customers. Companies that have good customer interactions tend to reap the advantages of greater profitability by reducing marketing and administrative expenses and improving sales development compared to provider companies that use a transactional strategy to customer service (Low & Johnston, 2006). This research empirically examines variables of customer engagement and relationships and demonstrates how these variables are interrelated and how improved company performance can be achieved.

This study's research environment is the Nigerian telecommunications industry. The fast growth in the mobile telecommunications services in Nigeria is due to the very strong competition among the major telecoms companies. Nigeria's mobile carriers are fully aware of the significance of customer-oriented business strategy as a prerequisite for keeping their competitive edge and keeping a stable level of profit and, indeed, their very survival. In Nigeria as of April 2018, the complete subscriber base for mobile telephony is over 173 million and is the fastest growing industry in Africa. (NCC,2019).

Globalcom (Glo), Mobile Telecommunications Network (MTN), Airtel and Etisalat are the main players in this industry. In addition to value-added products such as data, Internet Protocol (IP) telephone and multimedia, these companies provide fundamental mobile speech services. When the number of subscribers approaches its saturation point, it is not only hard but also expensive in terms of marketing procedures to create and secure new customers. It thus becomes an industry-wide conviction that adopting the best marketing strategy for customer engagement is crucial for maintaining current customers, attracting new customers and sustaining company results.

The concept of customer engagement in company interactions is not new, important practitioner interest in the idea has evolved over the past decade (Harvey 2005; Haven, 2007) so that customer involvement is a strategic imperative in interactive, vibrant company settings to generate improved company efficiency, including sales development (Neff, 2007). The rationale behind these claims is that committed

customers play a main role in viral marketing activity by offering references or suggestions to others for particular products, services or brands.

Engaged customers play a significant role in the development of new products and services (Hoyer, et al 2010; Kothandaraman and Wilson 2001; Nambisan and Nambisan 2008) and in the co-creation of knowledge and value for a business (Brakus et.al, 2009; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). The term "engagement" has been used in a variety of scholarly fields including sociology, political science, psychology, and organisational behaviour (Achterberg et al. 2003; Resnick 2001; Saks 2006).

Despite the increasing popularity of the word 'engagement', few authors have tried to describe the notion or examine how it varies from comparable related ideas such as participation and involvement. (Patterson et.al, 2006; Vivek et.al 2010), Hollebeek (2011), and Mollen and Wilson (2010) are a few who have differed. They define customer engagement from a psychological state or viewpoint. By comparison, Bowden (2009) views customer involvement as a psychological mechanism driving customer loyalty. While these writers highlight various elements of customer engagement, the conceptual foundations underlying the idea receive comparatively little attention. Drawing on the theory concerning interactive experience and value co-creation within marketing interactions can explain the conceptual origins of customer engagement.

Vargo and Lusch (2008) articulated this perspective as the 'service-dominant (S-D) marketing logic'. This theoretical lens offers a 'transcendent view of relationships' that contrasts with a more traditional, transactional view of marketing interactions, labelling the 'goods-dominant' perspective (Vargo 2009). This wider relational view acknowledges that the particular interactive, value co-creative experiences with organizations and/or other stakeholders of customers generate specific consumer behaviour results. Van Doorn et al. (2010) address the behaviours of customer engagement arising from motivational drivers including word-of-mouth, customer-to-customer (C2C) relationships and/or blogging. Customer engagement behaviours recommended by the authors go beyond 'transactions' and may be defined as 'client' behavioural manifestations that have a brand-or firm-focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers'.

Based on this rationale, Van Doorn et al. (2010) created a theoretical model that links customer engagement behaviours with particular customer, company, and contextual backgrounds and implications. Its input lies in providing the notion of customer engagement with a wider and more thorough theoretical assessment to identify its conceptual domain and provide a general definition.

### **3.3 Background of customer engagement**

The word customer engagement has distinct conceptualizations. From the point of perspective of the organisation, practitioners view customer engagement and describe it as "repeated interactions that strengthen the mental, psychological or physical investment of a customer in their dealings with a company" (Sedley 2010, p. 7). Academics however, regard customer engagement as "the intensity of customer engagement in a cooperative method of knowledge exchange with both organisation authorities and other customers" (Wagner and Majchrzak 2007, p. 20). Bowden (2009) given a conceptual customer engagement structure that, while concentrating only on current customers, indicates that customer-brand relationships and customer engagement strategies may vary depending on whether customers are first-time buyers or repeat buyers.

Marketers and researchers have switched their attention to an alternative perspective in marketing circles over the last fifteen years. Godson (2009, p.4) describes this alternative approach as "the concentration of marketing efforts and resources on the growth and maintenance of long-term, close interactions with customers and other stakeholders". According to the definition, marketing interactions reflected the evolving notion of customer requirements and triggered a significant change in marketing research and practice thinking.

It may be regarded that marketing interactions are restricted to customer interactions collectively referred to as Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (Harwood et.al, 2008). However, in order to satisfy the requirements of customers efficiently and stay competitive in the industry, businesses need to handle all their interactions, both inner and external. In reality, to boost customer support, businesses depend on marketing relationship tactics (Ashley et al., 2011). Considering relationship marketing as a CRM activity reflects the easy linear perspective, while considering the customer

relationship as a long-term relationship exchange represents a constellation of interactions as shown in Figure 2.1 (Vincent and Webster, 2013).

Relationship marketing range is very wide and includes a relationship constellation. Gummesson (1996) emphasizes the significance of other kinds of interactions and emphasizes the significant role that other inner and external relationships play in customer relationship achievement. Buttle (2009) also describes marketing relationships as the inclusion of inner tasks and external networks. As a consequence, the relationship marketing domain is much wider than mere CRM, covering a broad variety of fields including supply chain interactions, customer value management, retention and loyalty (Godson, 2009). Morgan and Hunt (1994p. 22) therefore state that marketing connection relates to "all marketing operations aimed at creating, creating and retaining a good exchange of relationships".

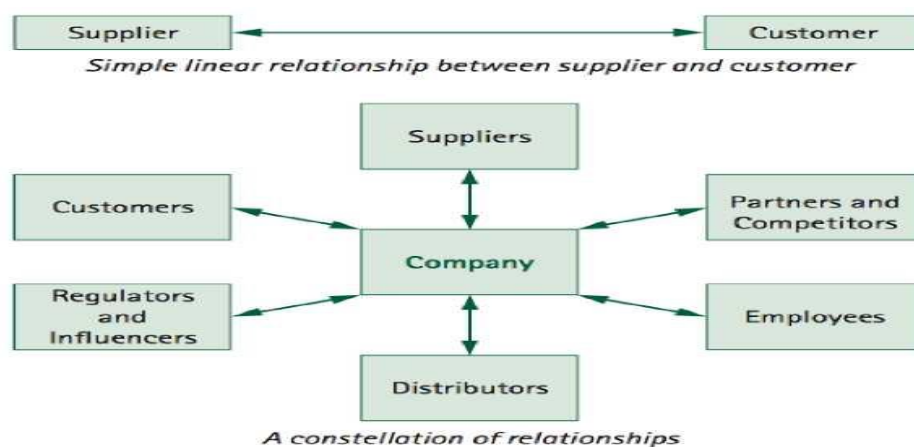


Figure 3.1 Linear and Constellation of Relationships (adapted from Godson, 2007)

Fornell and Wernerfelt (1987, 1988) and later Fornell (1992) proposed that either offensive or defensive marketing strategies could be classified. Offensive strategies are activities directed at acquiring extra customers, promoting brand switching and growing purchase frequency, while those directed at decreasing customer exit and brand switching are defensive marketing strategies. Researchers suggested in early conceptualizations of relationship marketing that the field of relationship marketing involves both offensive and defensive marketing operations aimed at "creating, creating and retaining effective relationship exchanges" (Morgan and Hunt 1994, p. 22). Despite the original wide conceptualization of relationship marketing as involving



attracting fresh customers and maintaining current customers, subsequent marketing relationship research was mainly restricted to studying defensive actions directed at enhancing and maintaining current customers in exchange-based buyer-seller interactions.

This obviously demonstrates that while the relationship marketing pioneers included attracting the customer as a marketing relationship objective, subsequent study mainly overlooked this aspect. The focus of studies on defensive approaches has resulted to the neglect of the study and use of marketing relationship values in offensive marketing strategies directed at customer acquisition, although the service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2008) and Prahalad and Ramaswamy's texts (2000, 2002, 2003, 2004) emphasize the significance of current and potential customer experiences.

Vargo and Lusch and Prahalad and Ramaswamy's strategy indicates that marketing relationship study should address both current and potential customer experiences and the value configurations these people and experiences derive from. Based on various researchers' texts. The settings show the focus, value basis, relationships, and results of the present marketing relationship study emphasis versus built-in customer engagement relationship marketing, emphasizing the relationships and experiences of existing and potential customers, who eventually derive value from these experiences and interactions.

This view is supported by the service-dominant logic, within which lies the customer engagement construction. Increasing the involvement of customers in the relationship marketing literature has motivated scientists to consider some of the following elements that need more study attention. First, companies are spending billions of dollars on prospective or future customers to expand their brand's value. For example, Microsoft and Apple are providing schools with computers, generating goodwill and reinforcing the favourable brand. Clinique organizes "Attracted to colour " make-up workshops twice a year to enable anyone who wants to have the opportunity to consult with their make-up experts on a one-on - one basis. These attempts are aimed at establishing customer engagement with the brand, whether an instant prospect is a purchase. Second, many present programs are not concentrated on buying, but merely concentrate on engaging with all stakeholders.

Often existing and potential customers communicate with each other. This interaction heavily influences their consumer choices, as other customers may be more influential than advertising from the business. Potential customers, for instance, often read other customers' internet reviews and product review websites before purchasing a product. Fourth, customer involvement in marketing relationship studies will enable organisations to consider possibilities for customer interaction and prospects to help them share experiences and solve each other's issues, such as childbirth or cancer seminars in many clinics that bring together patients in comparable life circumstances.

Some of these problems are addressed in the literature on customer groups, but the construction of customer engagement as a significant thought embedded in the marketing relationship. This paradigm enables a richer view of the relationships between organisations. Some of these issues are discussed in the literature on customer-business relationships, but the building of customer engagement as a major idea integrated in the marketing relationship paradigm allows a richer understanding of the interactions in what Vargo and Lusch (2008) call "value settings" between organisations, organisational networks, existing and potential customers.

This is crucial because with customer engagement embedded in the marketing literature relationship, interactions are not only between buyers and sellers, but between any mix of (and between) potential and current customers, non-customers, community in particular, their expanded interactions, and vendors. It is through such commitment that confidence, goodwill and commitment are created and consequently connections are established between people and brands (regardless of whether they are the brand's "buyers"). For instance, when the business offers schools with pcs, school kids can engage with Apple or Apple's computers. Customer engagement meets the above-mentioned demands and can thus help ensure that marketing relationship study focuses on this wider domain.

It goes without saying that the two-way interaction between suppliers and customers is at the core of customer engagement. In addition, there may be little time lag in action-response cases of elevated excitement. In relation to the suggested two-dimensional classification, during our study inquiry, several extra methods appeared to classify the focus of customer engagement. The engaging offers and activities could come from profitable or not-for-profit companies.

Engagement may be in the presence or lack of other customers (e.g. interacting with other pregnant moms at childbirth seminars or producing playlists on the iPod or online versus the actual globe). Customers may be involved either at the premises of the organisation or in personalized retail experiences or in locations other than the premises of the organisation.

### **3.4 Customer engagement in social science, management and practitioner literature**

The use of the term 'engagement' can be traced back to the 17th century when it was used to describe multiple notions, including moral or legal duty, obligation binding, betrothal, employment, or military conflict (Oxford English Dictionary, 2009). Since then, however, more volitional (Jennings and Stoker, 2004) and discretionary (Frank et al, 2004) interpretations of the concept have emerged in the literature, including those addressing the notion of "connection," "attachment," "emotional involvement," and "participation" used to describe specific forms of engagement (London et.al, 2007).

At the meta-level, "engagement" has been described as a type of social, interactive behaviour as a transient state happening over time within wider appropriate commitment procedures (Bryson and Hand, 2007; Huo et al, 2009). The word "commitment" has been widely used in areas such as psychology, sociology, political science, organisational behaviour and marketing over the past two centuries, resulting in a multitude of conceptual methods that highlight various elements of the idea (Hollebeek 2011; Ilic 2008). For instance, sociology researched "civic commitment" (Jennings and Stoker 2004; Mondak et al. 2010), psychology studied "social engagement" (Achterberg et al. 2003; Huo, Binning, and Molina 2009). In addition, educational psychology has studied "student participation" (Bryson and Hand 2007; Hu 2010), while political science has looked at nation states "involvement" (Kane 2008; Resnick 2001). In addition, the words "staff commitment" (Catteeuw, Flynn and Vonderhorst 2007; Crawford, LePine, and Rich, 2010) and "stakeholder commitment" were studied in the organisational behaviour and management literature (Greenwood, 2007; Noland and Phillips, 2010).

Engagement has been described in a variety of ways across a spectrum of social science fields, thus expanding marketing discipline knowledge of the idea. This

provides an understanding of the predominantly cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensionality of customer engagement by showing the different proposed dimensions of specific engagement forms. The definitions reviewed are predominantly a multidimensional notion of commitment. The expression of particular cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects, however, differs significantly across performers and contexts of commitment. In addition, the original use of the word "commitment" was traced back to Appelbaum (2001) in the business practice discourse.

A variety of definitions for multiple types of commitment has been suggested over the past decade, illuminating the idea from distinct stakeholders and contextual perspectives such as customer behaviour, online communities. A choice of definitions depicts the occurrence of prominent engagement states within wider engagement procedures defined by particular interactions and experiences between a focused topic, e.g., customer, student) and object, e.g., course, module; brand, product, or organisation. Specific objects of commitment can range from people such as a particular individual to collective objects such as a particular political institution; (Kane, 2008).

The marketing literature shows a prominence of the commitment view of multidimensional cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. Despite the prominence of the multidimensional view, however, over 40% of the concepts reviewed in the literature on scholarly and company practice express commitment as a one-dimensional notion and as such concentrated on either the emotional, cognitive or behavioural aspect of commitment. Within the uni-dimensional view, the behavioural aspect appears dominant.

However, although the uni-dimensional methods have the merit of simplicity, they fall short in reflecting the engagement's wealthy conceptual scope. Several studies within the fields of social science and business management acknowledge the incidence of changes in focal level commitment across "commitment states" that are observed within wider, iterative procedures of commitment. Specific examples of this observation include studies on "civic commitment" (Balsano, 2005; Jennings and Zeitner, 2003), "stakeholder engagement" (Greenwood, 2007; Grudens-Schuck, 2000), "state engagement" (Kane, 2008; Resnick, 2001), "social involvement" (Achterberg et al., 2003; Bejerholm and Eklund, 2007; Huo, Binning and Molina, 2009;

Saczynski et al., 2006) and "social engagement" (Achterberg et al., 2003; Bejerholm and Eklund, 2007; Huo, Binning and Molina, 2009).

The study also shows that focal engagement procedures can range from short-term, extremely variable, to long-term, and comparatively stable commitment manifestations (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris 2004). Furthermore, while the level of commitment of the subject at the beginning of the commitment phase is typically comparatively small, these tend to evolve over time under specific, favorable contextual circumstances (Bejerholm and Eklund 2007), including specific, beneficial interactions that foster the level of commitment of people during specific interactions.

### **3.5 Customer engagement in the marketing literature**

In scholarly marketing and service literature, the terms "customer engagement" and "consumer involvement" have only transpired in the last ten years. Unlike the literature on social science, management and company practice, which offers a plethora of definitions of appropriate types of commitment, there have been comparatively few attempts to systematically conceptualize customer engagement in the marketing literature to date. The conceptualizations identified in the literature recognize the existence of the concept of customer engagement cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions. Authors such as Patterson, Yu, and de Ruyter (2016), Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2010), Hollebeek (2011), and Mollen and Wilson (2010) provide these definitions.

These authors typically draw on the literatures accessible from associated areas such as social psychology in creating their definitions. For example, based on organisational behaviour studies, Patterson, Yu, and de Ruyter (2006) suggest four particular elements of customer engagement, including Absorption; level of customer concentration on a focus item, such as a brand or organisation, reflecting the cognitive dimension of commitment. Dedication; the feeling of belonging to the organisation or brand of a customer that corresponds to the emotional dimension of commitment. Vigour; the amount of energy and mental resilience of a customer to interact with an object of focused commitment. Finally, interaction; which is the two-way communication between the topic and the object of a focused commitment. The latter two dimensions ("vigour" and "interaction") represent the engagement's behavioural dimension.

Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2010), on the other hand, concentrated on particular behaviour and relationships. From a predominantly behavioural perspective, they view customer commitment. In particular, the recognized cognitive and emotional dimensions of commitment meant in their definition only the word 'link.' Based on a variety of social science and leadership studies, Hollebeek (2011, p. 6) describes "customer involvement" as "the level of the motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind of a customer defined by particular concentrations of cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity in brand interactions."

Furthermore, Mollen and Wilson (2010, p. 5) regard "customer engagement" to comprise an aggregate of consumer thinking processes that inform their purchase decision making. The writers also differentiate the notion from "participation." Specifically, it is suggested that customer engagement extend beyond participation to include a proactive, interactive customer connection with, for instance, a brand, a particular engagement object. Accordingly, the writers argue that customer engagement transcends the mere exercise of cognition, and unlike participation, it involves both experiential value satisfaction and instrumental value.

This argument is in line with the perspective of customer engagement within the transcendent perspective of interactions expressed within the S-D logic, highlighting Vargo's (2009) interactivity and customer experience. Bowden (2009) defines customer participation as "a psychological mechanism" driving customer allegiance, while Van Doorn et al. (2010) and Pham and Avnet (2009) concentrate on particular behaviours by identifying the idea mainly with regard to particular kinds and patterns of focal engagement operations.

According to Higgins and Scholers (2009), customer engagement relates to the state of being occupied, fully consumed or absorbed by a consumer, producing an attraction level to or repulsion from a focal object. The writers acknowledge the presence of, for instance, bonding, not only favourable expressions of commitment; by being attracted to the item, but also possibly adverse expressions of the idea. It's about separating from an item as well. It should be noted that, to date, the marketing literature has mainly concentrated on positive rather than adverse expressions of commitment.

In addition, advertising research has examined customer engagement with marketing and particular media (Woodard, 2006). Customer engagement was related to higher

advertising efficiency in this area (Calder and Malthouse 2005, 2008; Calder, Malthouse and Schadel, 2009; Wang 2006). For example, Calder and Malthouse (2008, p. 5), focus on the customer engagement experiential aspects. They describe media involvement as the sum of the consumer's motivational experiences with a media item.

In addition to Van Doorn et al. (2010), these authors make explicit reference to the motivational nature of customer engagement, which is also implied in the work of Mollen and Wilson (2010), Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2010), Patterson, Yu, and de Ruyter (2006), Pham and Avnet (2009), and Higgins and Scholer (2009). Also, Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Hermann (2005), who are exploring the impacts of consumer identification with a particular brand community, define brand group engagement as the consumer's intrinsic motivation to communicate and collaborate with community members. Sprott, Czellar, and Spangenberg (2009) also address the notion of customer participation in self-concept.

The assessment demonstrates the presence of transcendent customer service interactions, providing the wider conceptual domain that embeds customer engagement. In particular, this theoretical lens emphasizes the function of interactive customer experience and co-created value as the customer engagement's fundamental conceptual foundation. Unlike traditional relational ideas such as participation and involvement, customer engagement is based on the presence of focal interactive customer experiences with particular objects of engagement for example a brand. By expanding and refining the insights gained from the Social Science, Management and Marketing Literature Review (Hollebeek, 2011), the current assessment reaches five topics that can be used as a basis for developing a particular concept of customer commitment. The first theme argues that customer engagement reflects the psychological state of a customer induced by the specific interactive experiences of the individual with a focus object.

A second theme argues that particular states of customer engagement occur within broader, vibrant procedures typified by value co-creation. These are the first and second concepts that differentiate commitment from the notions of "participation" and "involvement" since the latter do not represent the concept of interactive, co-creative experiences as comprehensively as does customer engagement. A third theme

considers commitment to play a key role in service interactions where other relational concepts operate as precedents and implications of the particular commitment. A fourth theme posits participation as a multidimensional cognitive, emotional, and behavioural notion where the expression of particular mental, emotional, and behavioural aspects is a stakeholder for example customer and context dependent. A final theme affirms involvement within particular sets of context-dependent circumstances that generate various levels of customer engagement.

### **3.6 Summary of chapter**

This chapter presented a review of the literature, scope of the study and the literature engaged, which includes firms' and customer engagement. It also presented key theories and definitions of theoretical constructs and review of related empirical studies in the fields of customer engagement with key points of departures from existing literature.

In the context of the literature, the understanding of how consumers respond to a supplier's offerings of reinforcement and utilities in the contractual behaviour situation will define the main factors that govern engagement behaviour (Beckett et al., 2000; Choi et al., 2006; Pearlman, 2007). Accordingly, in this study the conceptual framework explains the behaviour of customers from the Customer Behaviour Perspective Model (Foxall, 1998) and the Service-Dominant logic by Vargo and Lusch (2004) underpinning the origins of consumers engagement with firms.

The constructs of buyer motivation as its relates to seller motivation will be addressed. The various drivers of customer engagements from in a supplier-customer relationship such as employees, trust, commitment, communication as the basis for enhanced company performance will be established. These constructs was modelled from engagement factors based on customer-firm relationship attributes in the mobile phone industry in Nigeria. This attributes is discussed extensively in chapter four.

Various studies have used different variables to measure the efficiency of companies. The indices include returns on investment, job, profit, sales, equity, resources, and competitive advantage, for instance. As a consequence, customer engagement and profitability was used in this research to evaluate the performance level of mobile telecom businesses. In this research, financial objectives and satisfaction were also



selected to evaluate company performance because, according to (Thong and Yap, 1995), telecommunications businesses can enhance their efficiency and effectiveness by giving their customers the chance to engage with them in order to gain customer confidence.

In this study, business performance is described as a key variable. The study also selected employees as a vital determinant of company performance in a developing country like Nigeria (Reardon et al, 1998). The mobile phone companies are able to increase efficiency based on their improved performance and revenues (Walker and Brown, 2004). This study reflects changes in the level of performance of the mobile telecom companies from increase in customer engagement.

As mentioned in this Chapter, there is little empirical research to show the connection between customer engagement and company performance in developing African countries. However, there is a significant amount of research investigating the adoption of telecoms and business performance in developed countries. Empirical evidence has also shown that there is a significant association between customer engagement and a firm's performance (Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2013).

The conceptual framework of this study (in Chapter 4) highlights the scope of trust, communication and commitment as key customer engagements constructs (Jarvis, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2003). These constructs are created based on the conceptualization from extant literature. The domains are used to promote the subsequent creation of a general customer engagement concept. The focus in the development of the conceptual framework of this study and the overall definition is to provide a conceptualization that will be relevant in a variety of circumstances in both developing and developing economies.

Also, in the conceptual framework, the constructs of buyer motivation and seller motivation is highlighted as drivers of customer engagements. The other drivers outlined in this supplier-customer framework are employees, trust, commitment, and communication. These constructs serve as basis for enhanced company performance. They will be discussed extensively in chapter four.

## **Chapter Four – Conceptual foundations of customer engagement**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter, relevant literature related to customer engagement was reviewed. This chapter will focus on the conceptual foundations of this research and is structured as follows: The first section provides the conceptual relationship of customer engagement and involvement. Section two discusses the development of the conceptual model; and the third section presents the research model and states the research hypotheses; and section four provides a summary to the chapter.

### **4.2 Conceptual foundations of customer engagement**

The view of relationships and service management was first studied three decades earlier by the Nordic college (Gronroos 2010; Gummesson 1994), although Vargo and Luschs (2004) provide a more official expression of this view, which the author's word is the service-dominant (S-D) logic. They also presented The S-D logic is presently expressed using a set those foundational premises portraying marketing re-dominance.

These basic premises underpinning the S-D logic are of specific significance in determining the conceptual foundations underpinning the evolving notion of customer commitment (Vargo and Lusch 2008). They state that the customer is always a co-creator of value, which highlights the interactive, co-creative nature of value creation within service interactions between customers or other actors. In addition, they add, all social and financial actors are resource integrators, which indicates the context of creating value within networks.

Vargo and Lusch (2008, p. 32) state in justifying these premises: S-D logic's service basis offers the motive for interaction and network creation. This is the use of a resource network for the benefit of others (individually and collectively) to obtain service from others. Service defines the logic of interactivity as used in the S-D logic. This premise is based on the reality that value is always determined by the beneficiary in a unique and phenomenological manner. In particular, this structure emphasizes the notion of value co-creation's extremely experiential, inherently subjective, and contextual nature. This specific premise is rooted in the concept of experience

economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999), service encounters and service capes (Bitner 1992).

On the other side, Schembri (2006, p. 388) indicates that customers typically behave as prosumers within the S-D logic in the manner they generate distinctive experiences; hence they are not simply recipients, nor co-producers, as in the rational sense, but co-creators of their service experience. Their research demonstrates that a service-centred perspective is fundamentally customer-oriented and relationship-oriented. In this context, service is regarded through focal interactions and/or interactive experiences to create particular customer advantages through the co-creation value with other actors in particular service relationships. These four premises provide a conceptual basis for customer engagement concept creation that represents the interactive, co-creative experiences of customers with other stakeholders in focal, networked service interactions.

In addition, Lusch and Vargo (2010) indicate that interactive, co-creative customer experiences can be viewed as engaging. Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2010) acknowledge the key position of customer engagement from what the writers call an extended marketing relationship perspective. Other writers note that this view emphasizes the significance of creating and retaining long-lasting, value-laden interactive customer relationships (Christopher, Payne, and Ballantyne 1993; Morgan and Hunt 1994) and co-creation of value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004). Additional support for the S-D logic underpinning the conceptual origins of customer engagement is given through scrutiny of latest literature written by a variety of academics. Typically, the terms engagement or engagement are used in debates about procedures, co-creation, solution creation, and usage, interactions, or appropriate types of service exchange based on marketing.

The terms engagement is also associated with customer or brand experience, emotion, creativity, cooperation, teaching, or brand community interactions in research discussing company to consumer relationships. The term engagement appear to substitute more traditional relational ideas, including involvement and participation. Recent study on value development in brand societies by Schau, Muniz and Arnould (2015) is based on the term engagement and refrains entirely from using the terms, involvement and participation. Despite the comparatively profuse use of the terms,

engagement in literature, however, the conceptualization of the word or its conceptual distinctiveness from more traditional notions is provided little specific attention.

### **4.3 Conceptual relationship of customer engagement**

The level of concern and private significance of an individual in relation to a focal item or choice in relation to its fundamental values, objectives, and self-concept (Mittal, 1995; Zaichkowsky, 1994). Customer engagement prior to the expression of the appropriate level of involvement of the customer. The level of service produced and delivered by customers (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). Customer engagement prior to the expression of the level of customer engagement of the individual is needed. It is a state of ideal experience characterized by concentrated attention, clear mind, unison of body, effortless concentration, full control, loss of self-awareness, time distortion, and inherent pleasure.

Customer engagement may function as a precedent in particular situations, including the level of harmonious, empathetic or compassionate association with other internet settings that is regarded in some manner as self-congruent (Brooks, 1989); and a feeling of real interpersonal awareness and concern (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Customer engagement can be used in particular situations as a precedent for current customers, and a result for fresh customers and cumulative customer satisfaction. Johnson and Fornell, 1991 asserted that general assessment of customer engagement based on the general experience of buying and consuming goods services over time. Customer engagement behaviour and its background is not merely an experience for current customers; on the other hand, it can behave as a result of the commitment of fresh customers and the appreciation of an continuing connection to warrant maximum attempts to preserve it, that is a desire to preserve the relationship (Moorman, Rohit and Gerald, 1993; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Van Doorn et al., 2010).

Customer engagement results from a possible beneficial connection with the involvement recognition aspect (Saks, 2006). Previous customer commitment to current customers (Bowden 2009, 2009). Van Doorn et al. (2010), on the other hand, regard engagement as a precedent for current customers customer engagement behaviour. Customer engagement is also a trust Consumer-perceived safety, brand interaction reliability and the conviction that the brand acts in the best interests of consumers (Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, and Yague-Guillen, 2003;) and

customers (Bowden, 2009). Van Doorn et al. (2010), on the other hand, view trust as a precedent for current customers customer commitment behaviour and self-brand relationship to the extent that customers have integrated products into their self-concept (Escalas, 2004; Escalas and Bettman, 2005) Potential customer engagement can also be developed on the basis of particular customer-specific interactive brand experiences and emotions.

Potential customer engagement may lead from the particular, interactive brand experiences of a consumer, repeated loyalty purchases or behavioural loyalty resulting from a powerful inner disposition (Day, 2009) over a specified period of time. Bowden 2009; Patterson, Yu, & de Ruyter, 2006; and Schneider 2008) This particular definition also goes beyond the scope of the idea of Van Doorn et al. (2010), which focuses on particular customer engagement behaviours. Moreover, the suggested particular definition is wide in relation to the conceptualization of Calder and Malthouse (2008), which is limited to the experiential elements of media involvement.

The concept that the interactive, co-created experiences of the customer play a key position in focal service interactions is essential to the suggested definition. This notion has its theoretical origins in S-D logic and in relationship marketing's extended domain. This wide theoretical view can be used to distinguish customer engagement from other related ideas such as confidence and engagement within a nomological network that characterizes particular service interactions.

Some of these associated concepts, such as engagement and involvement, were found to portray the antecedents of needed customer engagement, while others, such as flow, report, were defined more accurately as antecedents or consequences of potential customer engagement. The iterative nature of the service relationship system includes the relational consequences of client engagement, including commitment, trust, self-brand connection, emotional brand attachment, or loyalty, which can serve as a backdrop to the customer's subsequent interactive, co-creative experiences with a focus item, such as a brand.

In their research (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Cova and Salle 2008) draw attention to the nature and dynamics of particular conceptual interactions based on S-D logic and the role of wider and/or higher marketing theory. They proposed that the connections between S-D logic and consumer culture theory could provide possibilities

for further growth and conceptualization of customer engagement by paying more attention to the co-creative skills of the value of customers.

Further insights may also be provided by establishing conceptual links with other theoretical views, including the theory of social exercise. For instance, by embedding the concept of engagement within the perspective of a theory of social practice informed by S-D logic. Schau, Muniz, and Arnould (2009) recognized four particular engagement methods that add to value co-creation within a brand community environment, including documenting, badging, mile-stoning, and staking.

In addition, the notion is of customer engagement having the capacity to contribute to other service-centred study frameworks. These frameworks address interactive, value-added co-creative experience and establish conceptual linkages with other conceptually associated ideas, such as Verhoef et al. (2009) customer experience in retail. In addition, the commitment of customers to various kinds of objects (e.g. networked organisations, vendors, or government) was also worthy of attention in their research.

While brands or organisations have to date been the main objects of commitment examined in customer engagement studies, the roles of particular products or services, categories, stakeholders and/or appropriate organisations, such as governing bodies of government and business, are similarly crucial. Kothandaraman and Wilson 2001 also focused on the dyadic and networked elements of commitment within the relationships between particular consumer-to-business (C2B), business-to-business (B2B) and consumer-to-consumer (C2C).

Consumer engagement comprises, according to Appelbaum (2001), of both rational loyalty-general satisfaction, intention to buy back, and intention to advise. The emotional attachment that includes trust in a brand, faith in its integrity, brand pride, and enthusiasm for it. Smith and Wallace (2010) expressed the view that customer involvement (customer engagement) refers to the kinds of links that customers create with other customers, businesses and brands. They saw customer engagement as conducive to brand loyalty improvement. Their job demonstrated commitment to the customer to include retention, effort, advocacy, and enthusiasm.

Commitment promotes marketing and branding operations in consumers' hearts and minds in a way that contributes to improved sales, enhanced margin, greater market share, market value, and sustenance of cash flow (Campanelli, 2007). Customer engagement is consumer Foley's emotional link and empowerment (2006). It is a multidimensional idea and process, with the consequence identified as the mental, behavioural, emotional and aspirational facets of the customer association (Ghuneim, 2006).

Consumer engagement is a consumer-based measurement of communication with a brand element and the capacity of the brand to interact with the customer in a meaningful manner (Harris, 2006; Haven, 2007). Harris, (2006), suggested a fresh metric, which involves four elements: participation, interaction, intimacy, and impact. Peppers and Rogers (2005) submitted that customer engagement is a series of customized information and financial transactions that take place over time and increase both the company's consumer value and the consumer's value. Repeated interactions are reinforcing the mental, psychological, or physical investment of a consumer in a brand (Sedley, 2008) and a process of creating and nurturing relationships.

Heath (2007) proposed a subconscious emotional structure for customer engagement. This commitment can transform into action or behaviour, e.g. communication or buy, while Shevlin, (2007) advocated repeated customer involvement and satisfying interactions that reinforce a consumer's emotional link with a brand or product or business. The commitment shows the amount of genuine commitment, intensity, contribution and ownership. The level of customer participation is an estimation of the extent and level of visitor interaction, measured against a clearly specified set of objectives. The commitment version of every organisation is distinctive. It is obtained from multiple root metrics, including frequency, recency, and visit duration, purchases, and value for life.

Pioneer studies in the literature point to customer relationship marketing (CRM) as the precursor of customer engagement. This involves attracting (Berry, 1983, p. 25; Berry and Parasuraman, 1991, p. 133) and creating relationships (Gronroos, 1990; Morgan and Hunt, 1994) while also improving, creating, maintaining or maintaining relationships. Customer-company relationship interactions are guided by the

company, and the results of these interactions are evaluated in terms of the exchange of products and services. Customer engagement is a marketing structure that applies to both offensive and defensive marketing strategies directed at attracting, constructing, retaining and improving potential and current customer relationships.

Research within the fields of marketing and management recognizes the vibrant nature of the commitment process, defined by particular cyclical, iterative dynamics. Specific relationship consequences of customer engagement may extend over time to act as antecedents of customer engagement in subsequent customer engagement processes and cycles, thus recognizing the iterative nature of the involvement process. Over time, these can be viewed as feedback loops:" While these concepts are related backgrounds, many of them can also have related consequences; in particular, involvement, flow, and interactions. For example, if customers are more engaged, they will have more involvement (a consequence of behaviour) and a better sense of relationship (a consequence of psychology). Using the logic of feedback loops over time, these can be consequences as well as antecedents.

The commitment process can be seen as a sequence of aggregated states of commitment (Dunham, Klimczak, & Logue, 1993; Zhou, Hall, & Karplus, 1999). Based on this observation, the method of customer engagement can vary from short-term to long-term and/or fairly stable to extremely variable, which can produce varying amounts of intensity and complexity of customer engagement over time. Moreover, the iterative nature of the customer engagement method means that customer involvement may re-emerge over time through repeated, temporarily distributed interactions with a focal engagement object. Customer engagement plays a key role in the service relationships nomological network. By definition, it does not work in isolation as an evolving relational notion of customer engagement.

By comparison, the idea is integrated within a wider network of service interactions in which other relational concepts, such as participation or participation, represent precedents and implications of particular customer engagement within a nomological network of conceptual interactions, respectively. Social science, management literature and practice discourse analysis reveal a lack of agreement on the nature of particular ideas as antecedents, concurrent variables or implications of customer engagement.



This observation, however, serves as a further illustration of the iterative, process-based nature of aggregated customer engagement condition within a wider nomological service interaction network. Furthermore, the nature of customer engagement in service relationships is derived from the concept's interactive, experiential and co-creative features. (Brodie et al. 2015). In particular, the interactive, experiential elements of the concept distinguish customer engagement within a wider nomological network of service interactions from other relational ideas. Within this network, necessary customer engagement backgrounds that must arise as a precursor to customer engagement have been discovered to include involvement and involvement;' while other relational concepts, including flow and report have been discovered to be potential, rather than necessary, background context for customer engagement.

Similarly, the relationship implications of customer engagement may include commitment, trust, self-brand link, and consumers emotional brand attachment and allegiance (Brodie et al. 2011). This offers further justification for specifying these relational ideas as antecedents or implications of customer engagement and therefore indicates the conceptual distinctiveness of these ideas with respect to customer engagement. While participation and involvement are marked as antecedents of customer engagement, they may continue to coexist or coexist at the same time as customer engagement, thereby expanding beyond a previous state of rigid customer engagement.

Bowden (2009) argues that the iterative nature of the service relationship system that means the relational implications of customer engagement may eventually behave as a background to customer engagement. In addition, separate sub-processes of customer commitment may be noted for fresh customers as compared to current ones. For example, while the concepts of trust and commitment may represent antecedents of customer engagement for existing customers, these are, by definition, the consequences of customer engagement for new customers who interact for the first time with a specific object of engagement, such as a brand.

Customer engagement is a multidimensional notion that is subject to context-specific expression of appropriate cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects. The assessment of the definitions of commitment in the social science and management

literature and the business practice discourse shows that commitment was expressed to encompass multiple context or stakeholder-specific combinations of mental, emotional, and behavioural dimensions. However, as suggested in the marketing literature, many customer engagement definitions take a multidimensional perspective of the idea. Specifically, the relative significance of the cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects of customer engagement may differ with the particular set of situational contingencies under which customer engagement is observed, allowing different levels of intensity or complexity of customer engagement to arise.

Customer engagement takes place within a particular set of circumstances that generate different levels of customer engagement. This shows the essence of customer engagement as an individual, context-dependent idea that can be observed at various intensity or complexity levels at distinct times. The rationale behind this statement resides in the necessary presence of particular interactive experiences within particular sets of situational circumstances between a focused customer engagement topic and object (May, Gilson, and Harter 2004). In comparison to other marketing apps, Bezjian-Avery, Calder, and Lacobucci (1998) address the separate expression of internet customer engagement as opposed to offline settings, and across advertising. Specific customer engagement designations concentrated on low to high commitment (Shevlin 2007) and ranged from actively disengaged to completely engaged position (Bryson and Hand 2007).

Bryson and Hand proposed that customer engagement could be regarded as residing on a continuum, varying from non-engaged, that is the lack of customer firm or brand interactive experience, marginally engaged customers who are somewhat cognitive, social or behaviourally involved in a particular interactive experience, involved. This include broad levels of mental, social or behavioural involvement. A non-engaged state occurs either before or after the start of an individual's involvement with a focal item, while this may also happen during a" customer engagement dormancy period in which customer engagement is momentarily inactive during a specific interactive experience. Vibert and Shields (2003, p. 225) address the significance of considering the contextual nature of commitment (Shields, 2003) indicates that customer engagement, separate from its social, cultural and political framework, is a contradiction that ignores deeply integrated understanding of the purpose and nature of involvement itself.

#### **4.4 The Conceptual framework**

A conceptual framework is a less sophisticated form of theory that consists of statements that link abstract ideas with empirical information (Leshem and Trafford, 2007). Theories and conceptual frameworks are developed to account for or describe abstract phenomena that occur under similar conditions, according to Rudestam and Newton (2007, p. 112). The conceptual framework for this study is to provide a clear and explicit link between the theories, past results, research design, current study rationale, research results interpretation, and conceptual conclusion (Leshem and Trafford, 2007). The conceptual framework was created to provide a theoretical explanation of the goals and goals of the studies as well as to provide data on how to achieve the study's goals.

#### **4.5 Developing the conceptual framework**

This section will outline the construction of the conceptual framework of customer engagement and the impact on business performance based on drivers of customers engagement-employees, trust, commitment, communication, financial goals, satisfaction, seller motivation, buyer motivation, financial goals, and performance levels. The conceptual framework was developed and supported by the findings of from prior studies in the marketing literature based on customer service delivery and engagement.

For instance, this has been created using various methods, including a randomly measured probability process, descriptive; evolutionary; resource-based; learning; and deterministic methods (Dobbs and Hamilton, 2007). These were used to evaluate both company performance and sustained growth results. These various approaches to customer engagement research have provided distinct views on company relationships with customers, derived from multiple combinations of individual, company and environmental variables (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). Thus, the approach to customer engagement research and its connection to company results is not generally agreed. This research, however, utilizes a strategy that provides a useful model for evaluating fresh and established customer engagement and the performance and development results of companies, using a mixture of environmental and technological variables.

Since the early 1980s, pioneers have suggested that marketing relationships involve attracting relationships (Berry, 1983, p. 25; Berry and Parasuraman, 1991, p. 133) and creating relationships (Gronroos, 1990; Morgan and Hunt, 1994, p. 22) while also improving, creating, retaining, or maintaining relationships. Our exploration, however, demonstrates that the real focus of marketing relationship studies over the previous two centuries has focused mainly on improving, retaining and maintaining relationships with current customers, with little attention being paid to attracting fresh customers. The interactions in such relationships between customers and companies are guided by the company, and the results of these interactions are evaluated in terms of the return of products and services.

Incorporating customer engagement into the associated literature will therefore encourage more research that goes beyond purchasing and focuses on customer non-customer brand or product experiences than we presently see in the region. Customer engagement is a marketing interaction component that relates to both offensive and defensive marketing strategies for attracting, building, maintaining and enhancing relationships with prospective and existing customers. The findings from several qualitative investigations, including executive field interviews and customer exploratory information, help develop knowledge and defining the nature and scope of customer engagement. Figure 4.1 below shows the conceptual framework for this research.

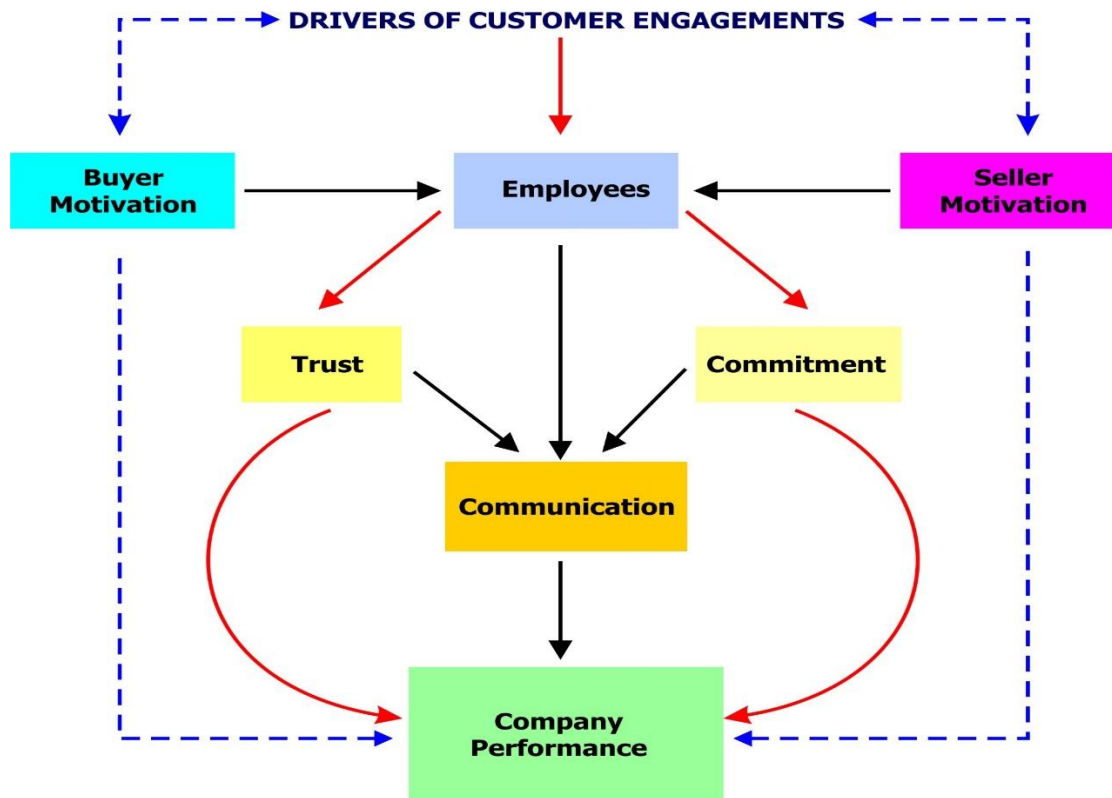


Figure 4.1: Conceptual Framework

The concept of customer engagement in business relationships is not new, the concept has developed extensively over the last decade. (Harvey 2005; Haven, 2007) so that it is now a strategic imperative in interactive, vibrant company environments to generate improved company output, including sales development (Neff, 2007). The reason behind these claims is that committed customers play a significant role in viral marketing activity by offering references or suggestions to others for particular goods, services or brands.

Engaged customers play an important role in new product or development and innovation services (Hoyer, et al 2010; Kothandaraman and Wilson, 2001; Nambisan and Nambisan, 2008) and in the co-creation of knowledge and value (Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantello, 2009; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). The word engagement has been used in a variety of scholarly fields, including sociology, political science, psychology, and organisational behaviour (Achterberg et al. 2003; Resnick 2001; Saks 2006). Despite the increasing popularity of the word engagement. Some authors have described the concept and examined its variation from comparable related ideas such as participation and involvement. Patterson, Yu, and de Ruyter (2006), Vivek, Beatty,

and Morgan (2010), Hollebeek (2011), and Mollen and Wilson (2010), define it as a psychological commitment by a customer. On the other hand, Bowden (2009) views customer involvement as a psychological mechanism driving customer loyalty. While these authors highlight various elements of customer engagement, the conceptual foundations underlying the idea are given comparatively little attention. By drawing on theory concerning interactive experience and value co-creation within marketing interactions, the conceptual roots of customer engagement can be clarified.

This view was expressed by Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2008) as the service-dominant (S-D) logic of marketing. This theoretical lens provides a transcendent view of relationships which contrasts with a more traditional, transactional view of marketing interactions, labelling the perspective of "goods-dominant" (Vargo 2009). This wider relational view acknowledges that the interactive, value co-creative interactions of customers with organisations and/or other stakeholders generate particular consumer behaviour results. Van Doorn et al. (2010) discuss "customer commitment behaviours" resulting from motivational drivers including word of mouth, customer-to-customer (C2C) relationships and/or blogging activity. The writers propose that "customer commitment behaviours go beyond transactions" (Van Doorn et.al. 2010) and may be described as "customer' behavioural manifestations that have, beyond purchase, a brand-or firm-focus arising from motivational drivers'."

Based on this rationale, Van Doorn et al. (2010) created a theoretical model that links customer engagement behaviours with particular customer, company, and contextual backgrounds and implications. Its input lies in providing the notion of customer engagement with a wider and more thorough theoretical assessment to identify its conceptual domain and provide a general definition.

#### **4.6 Conceptual framework of customer engagement**

Customer engagement was first described, and the nature of customer engagement delimited before shifting into how customer engagement applies to other constructs, based on literature review and in this research. Customer engagement is the intensity of the involvement of an individual in and association with the products or organisational operations of an organisation initiated by either the customer or the organisation. Existing or prospective customers may become committed and demonstrate this commitment in a logical, efficient, behavioural or social manner.

Cognitive and affective aspects of customer engagement incorporate customer experiences and emotions, and behavioural and social elements capture present and potential customer involvement both within and outside the exchange circumstances. Customer engagement includes the link between people and organisations based on their experience with the organisation's products and operations. Existing or potential customers create experience-based relationships through intensive brand involvement and distinctive experiences they have with the organisation's products and operations.

#### **4.7 The constructs of trust, commitment and communication**

Customer engagement is the intensity of the communication of an individual with a business organisation. It is related to the products or service offered by the organisation. In a perfect scenario, the engagement is triggered by operations of the organisation or initiated by the customer. Current or potential customers may be the people. Customer engagement can be cognitive, affective, behavioural, or socially manifested. Cognitive and affective aspects of customer engagement incorporate customer experiences and emotions, and behavioural and social elements capture present and potential customer involvement both within and outside the exchange circumstances. Based on their experience with the products and activities of the organisation, customer engagement involves the connection between individuals and organisations.

Potential or present customers create experience-based relationships through intensive brand involvement through the distinctive experiences they have with the organisation's products and operations. It is also seen as customer communication, defined as the degree to which the customer is engaged in the production or delivery of the service (Dabholkar, 1990), involving both the firm and the customer in an interactive scenario. Higher rates of excitement and consequently greater involvement with the organisation can result from this interaction (Bagozzi and Dholakia 2006).

The participation structure is the object's perceived significance based on intrinsic requirements, values, and concerns (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Participation is a mental, affective, or motivational structure that indicates the state of mind (Smith and Godbey, 1991) or perceived private significance, but is not perceived as behaviour (Celsi and Olson, 1988; Richins and Bloch, 1986; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Consequently, its

increased level of concern and caring indicates that involvement is a precedent. Involvement generates more internal search (Beatty and Smith, 1987), more processing depth (Burnkrant and Sawyer, 1983), more elaboration (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986), and increased product testing (Krugman, 1965; Robertson, 1976). Companies improve their significance in the minds of consumers by offering possibilities for risk-free communication, which is likely to lead to more committed potential customers.

Sheth, Newman, and Gross, (1991) propounded the consumer values theory as Holbrook, (2006) put forward the consumer values perspective. They both suggest that the motivations of customers to engage depend on the value they expect from their experience with the business organisation. Values can be either inherent or extrinsic. When, for its own sake, the customer appreciates a commitment action as a self-justifying end in itself (Holbrook 2006). The customer derives satisfaction from its intrinsic value. But if an initiative makes it possible for the customer to conduct some activity better, the extrinsic value is derived. Because of the active process of co-production and participation in the process of design and manufacturing (Garber, Hyatt, and Boya, 2009), such as when customizing a mobile phone to one's requirements, higher commitment will be associated with perceptions of higher value obtained.

Customer engagement also generates possibilities for communication by establishing a macro-level feedback loop between marketers, customers and society (Garber, Hyatt, and Boya, 2009). The principle of reciprocal action indicates that one party will reciprocate activities made in a partnership by another party because each party anticipates possible guilt if the norm of reciprocity is breached (Li and Dant 1997). Thus, in proportion to what they receive, people will return good for good (Bagozzi, 1995). Working together with a brand makes the client feel invested in a brand. Thus, on the grounds of qualitative results and the reciprocity norm, as the customer perceives that he or she receives greater value from an offer or activity, the customer, in turn, becomes more involved and is more involved in the offer or activity, creating a feedback loop.

Trust happens, according to Morgan and Hunt (1994), when one party has confidence in the reliability and integrity of an exchange partner. Trust is crucial in the evolutionary



model of relational exchange as it acts as a mechanism of relational governance that guarantees partners reciprocity and non-opportunistic behaviour (Ganesan, 1994; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Previous study shows that beneficial interactions in extra-exchange relationships contribute to confidence in the relationship of exchange (Ganesan 1994; Lambe, Spekman, and Hunt, 2000; Parkhe, 1993). There is a chance for interactions when firms engage customers that, if satisfied, can lead to confidence. Higher involvement should therefore generate more confidence in relationships as customers will think the business cares about them and has their best interests at heart.

Commitment is the psychological attachment of the exchange partner to the other and is based on feelings of identification, loyalty and membership (Verhoef, Franses, and Hoekstra, 2002). Bansal, Irving, and Taylor, 2004, indicate that engagement is an attachment based on desire. Commitment reflects a psychological bond with a business that motivates the customer to stay in a partnership with an organisation because they really want to be there. Higher rates of benefits resulting from engaging in the products or operations of an organisation will tend to result in higher affective commitment to the company (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997).

Organisations see word of mouth as an instrument of promotion (Bone 1995; Feick, Price, and Higie, 1986). Pleasant word of mouth may include relating enjoyable, vivid, or novel experiences, suggestions to others, and even noticeable display (Anderson, 1998). Brown et al. (2005) and Matos and Rossi (2008) claim that extremely efficient facilitators of favourable word of mouth are satisfied and engaged customers. Matos and Rossi (2008) also demonstrate that extremely committed customers are more likely to deliver positive word of mouth and behave as a brand advocate, so when customers are extremely committed to a brand, they are more likely to pass positive word of mouth and behave as a brand advocate.

Brand loyalty is the partial behavioural response that some decision-making unit has expressed over time as a function of psychological evaluation processes in relation to one or more alternative products from a set of such customers (Jacoby and Chestnut 2014). This brand loyalty conceptualization focuses on both psychological and behavioural loyalty elements. Customer engagement is different from brand loyalty in

that it does not carry out a brand comparison assessment, nor does it require behavioural decision-making regarding a transaction or repurchase.

In terms of experience, the cognitive, affective, behavioural and social elements of customer engagement are not an exchange. While customer engagement is separate from brand loyalty, the customer involved creates a powerful link with the business or brand he or she is associating with as a form of involvement. This link strengthens the thought process and improves the probability of a favourable reaction to the brand or organisation (Jacoby and Chestnut, 2014). Customer engagement strengthens Oliver's (1999) classic loyalty concept of hierarchy-of-effects. Oliver suggested that customers first process data into opinions, then use those opinions to form attitudes, and then create behavioural choices based on relative strength of attitude.

On the continuum of belief-attitude behaviour, a committed customer is likely to transit quicker. In addition, a dedicated person may create more favourable attitudes towards a product, business, or brand that he or she associates with the dedication and may therefore feel more allegiance to the organisation. Customer involvement, defined as the degree to which the customer is engaged in the production or delivery of the service (Dabholkar 1990), involves both the company and the customer in an interactive scenario. Higher rates of excitement and consequently greater involvement with the organisation can result from this interaction (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006).

As shown in Figure 4.1, the conceptual framework defines the connection between the main constructs in this study. The idea behind the proposed framework is that the relationship drivers derives from the employees of the firms who must build and develop trust to obtain commitment of the buyers. This action combined with the seller motivation predicts enhanced business performance and growth outcomes which consequently allows for the customers to gain satisfaction and financial goals achievement by the business.

Achieving improved business performance using customer engagement involves information exchange between firms and customers through the building of trust, using employees of the mobile phone companies. The output generated from this information exchange defines the business performance and generates growth outcomes for the mobile phone companies, which in turn feeds back into the company's motivations.

#### **4.8 Development of the research hypotheses**

This research focuses mainly on the evolving role of customer engagement in a developing country's mobile telecom businesses. It explores whether there is a connection between mobile telecommunications companies, customer engagement and performance. The conceptual framework (Figure 4.1) is converted into a research model with measurable constructs to assist in the development of the research hypothesis.

Various studies have used different variables to measure the efficiency of companies. The indices include returns on investment, job, profit, sales, equity, resources, and competitive advantage, for instance. As a consequence, customer engagement and profitability is used in this research to evaluate the performance level of the mobile telecom businesses. In this research, financial objectives and satisfaction were also selected to evaluate company performance because, according to (Thong and Yap, 1995), telecommunications businesses can enhance their efficiency and effectiveness by giving their customers the chance to engage with them in order to gain customer confidence. In this framework, the effect of customer engagement in a developing country, can be seen in the mobile telecom companies by way of increased return on investment, and the use of value-creation approaches such as marketing promotion, new product development, and technology obtained from frequent customer reviews and feedback (Barney, 1991; Freel, 2000).

#### **4.9 The research hypotheses**

Research hypotheses are a conceptual domain that describes a concept's scope and delineation (Jarvis, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2003). The hypotheses are created based on the underpinning conceptualization extracted from the synthesis of literature mentioned in the previous sections. These literatures describe the conceptual domain of customer engagement. The domains are used to promote the subsequent creation of a general customer engagement concept. The focus in the development of the study hypotheses and the overall definition is to provide a conceptualization that will be relevant in a variety of circumstances rather than a scenario.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, there is little empirical research to show the connection between customer engagement and company performance in developing African

countries. However, there is a significant amount of research investigating the adoption of telecoms business performance in developed countries. Empirical evidence has also shown that there is a significant association between customer engagement and a firm's performance (Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2013). The hypotheses of this study is that *customer engagement is an experience resulting from their interactions within defined business relationships and measurable service delivery*.

#### **4.10 Summary of chapter**

In this chapter, the conceptual framework was presented. The relationship drivers of trust, commitment and communication is projected. It also outlines the strategic roles of employees who carry out the operations of the business and the linkage between the customers and the mobile phone companies. The next chapter will present the research methodology.

## **Chapter Five – Research Methodology**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Based on the distinct viewpoints of the literature reviewed in Chapters Three, the conceptual framework and the research model were created in Chapter Four to create a meaning for the study. The research design and methodology will be discussed in this section. The methodology offers a structure for information collection and analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce a suitable research approach structure that would help this study in attaining its goal of researching how customer engagement improves efficiency in the mobile telecom industry. Also addressed in this chapter is the research strategy that promotes this study as well as the reasons for the choice of such methods. This is to make the chosen study strategy understandable and valid.

This chapter is structured as follows: Section 5.2 identifies the research methodology; Section 5.3 describes the study strategy; Section 5.4 defines the place of the survey and the research population; Section 5.5 defines the sample size and frame; Section 5.6 describes the response rate; Section 5.7 describes the sampling processes; Section 5.8 describes the data collection methods. Section 5.9 discusses the design of the questionnaire; Section 5.10 presents the pilot survey; Section 5.11 outlines the coding and testing of data information; Section 5.12 outlines the data analysis; Section 5.13 outlines the problems with the research; Section 5.14 presents the ethical consideration; and Section 5.15 provides a summary of the section.

### **5.2 Research Methodology**

Methodology relates to the concept of how to conduct research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). It relates to the process of investigating and acquiring understanding about truth by a scientist. There are three approaches to studies and the researcher needs three aspects of investigation in selecting a suitable strategy to a study. These include use of expertise, investigation strategies and techniques (gathering, analyzing and writing information). The research design focuses on the researcher's understanding, the procedures that inform investigation policies, and the techniques to be used for information collection and evaluation (Punch, 2005; Creswell, 2009). These three research elements combine to define the three distinct study approaches: quantitative; qualitative; and mixed research methods that are, in turn, translated into

study design procedures (Creswell, 2003), and are usually used in management and social sciences.

According to Creswell (2009), quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the connection between factors that can be measured in turn, typically on tools, and analysing information using statistical processes. While qualitative research is a meaning to explore and understand the significance that people or organisations attribute to a social or human issue. According to Bryman (2011), both quantitative and qualitative research can be regarded as showing a set of unique but epistemologically complementary views about what amounts to acceptable information.

In differentiating between quantitative research and qualitative research, Creswell (1994) used philosophical assumptions. The statements used include; the ontological assumption: what is genuine; the epistemological assumption: the researcher's relationship to that being investigated; the axiological assumption: the role of values in the study; the rhetorical assumption: the research language; and the methodological assumption: the research study process. Table 5.1 presents the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative research as mentioned by Creswell.

**Table 5.1: Differences between quantitative and qualitative research**

<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Ontological Assumption	What is the nature of reality?	Reality, apart from the researcher, is objective and unique.	Reality as seen by respondents in a research is subjective and multiple.
Epistemological Assumption	What is the relationship of the researcher to that researched?	The researcher is autonomous of the research being done.	Researcher interacts with the research being done.
Axiological Assumption	What is the role of values?	Value-free and impartial	Value-laden and Pre-judicial

Rhetorical Assumption	What is the language of research?	Formal, use of accepted quantitative phrases, based on fixed definitions, impersonal speech.	Informal decision-making, Personal voice, accepted qualitative phrases.
Methodological Assumption	What is the research process?	Deductive process, Cause and effect, Static design, categories isolated before the study, Context-free generalization leading to forecast, explanation and comprehension, Precision and reliability.	Inductive process, Simultaneous shaping of factors, emerging design categories recognized during the study phase, Context-based patterns, theories created for accurate and reliable comprehension through verification.

Source: Creswell, (1994)

Researchers who used contrasting characteristics to explain the distinct methods have investigated the distinctions between quantitative research and qualitative research as described in Table 5.1 (Bryman, 2011). According to Bryman (2011); Franfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2007); and Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007), quantitative research includes a set of ideas used in relation to the study, preceding information collection (deductive approach). From an epistemological point of perspective, it is positivism. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) defined qualitative research as a method in which information collection (inductive approach) provides theoretical explanations and ideas. It is interpretive from a constructionist point of perspective in an epistemological and ontological context, as knowledge is regarded

as undefined, while social phenomena and their significance are continuously reviewed and achieved by social actors.

As Das (1983) mentioned, qualitative and quantitative study is not divergent, but focuses on the distinct elements of the same phenomenon (Amaratunga et al, 2002). Therefore, the contrasting characteristics between quantitative research and qualitative research should not be a difficult and quick distinction; however, it is best regarded complementary and can be blended with a variety of research types. Mixed method research usually relates to a mixture of two methods of research: the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to study the same subject, which is a instrument used to gain data and outcomes, as well as to assist in inferences and conclusions drawing. It utilizes methods and analytical procedures for qualitative and quantitative data collection, either simultaneously or sequentially, but does not combine the two (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007).

Mixed method research enables for triangulation in a study of the same phenomenon, which is the mixture of two methodologies. The hypothesis of triangulation is based on its utility and the principle that each technique compensates for its weakness by counterbalancing another's strengths (Amaratunga et al, 2002). In addition, Rossman and Wilson (1994) clarified that there is a detailed connection between quantitative data and qualitative information, thus offering richer information and initiating fresh lines of thinking in studies.

The mixed method process strategy assumes that quantitative data can facilitate the qualitative side of a research by identifying a representative sample that can be helpful in creating generalizability, while qualitative information can promote the quantitative side of the research by assisting with the conceptual growth, instrumentation, and interpretation of outcomes (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The advantages of using the mixed method approach in business research, according to Gilmore and Coviello (1999), are that data can be collected and analyzed holistically, allowing the researcher to take into account the characteristics of the business; and the research can be conducted in a relatively dynamic environment. It also enables flexibility in interpretive methods (Humerinta-Peltomaki and Nummela, 2006).



### 5. 3 The Paradigm Wars

The global community of researchers is sandwiched between two extremes. The search for a middle remains elusive. In the methodological struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, the battle for the soul of qualitative and quantitative research was apparent (Wright, 2006). In their work, Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2003), expanded their time frame to embrace at least three paradigm wars, or periods of conflicts: the postpositivist-constructivist war against positivism (1970-1990); the conflict between competing postpositivist, constructivist, and critical theory paradigms (1990-2005); and the current conflict between evidence-based methodologists and the mixed methods, interpretive, and critical theory schools (2005-present).

The first 1980s wars came to an end when post-positivists, constructivists, and critical theorists reconciled ideas, working through issues connected to ethics, field studies, praxis, criteria, knowledge accumulation, truth, significance, values and politics (Guba, 1990). The second paradigm conflict occurred within the mixed methods community and involved disputes "between individuals convinced of the 'paradigm purity' of their own position". (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003). The purists extended and repeated the argument that quantitative and qualitative methods and postpositivism and the other "isms" cannot be combined because of the differences between their underlying paradigm assumptions.

On the methodological front, the incompatibility thesis was challenged by those who invoked triangulation as a way of combining multiple methods to study the same phenomenon (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003a). This ushered in a new round of arguments and debates over paradigm superiority. A soft, apolitical pragmatic paradigm merged in the post 1990 period and quantitative and qualitative methods became compatible, and researchers could use both in their empirical inquiries (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003a). Proponents of both divide resorted to an arrangement without contention that "no incompatibility between quantitative and qualitative methods exists at either the level of practice or epistemology. However, this soft approach compromise between both camps faced also met with academic and disciplinary resistances. The resistance became the battleground of the third war and current upheaval and argument about scientific research in the scholarly world of education (Clark and Scheurich, 2008; Scheurich and Clark, 2006).

In this battle, politics situate methodology within and outside the academic spectrum and procedural issues define how qualitative methodology is used to produce knowledge about the world (Seale et.al., 2004). Often, in this debate, the political and the procedural intersect is termed unscientific, only exploratory, or subjective, criticism and not theory, or interpreted politically as a disguised version of secular humanism in the academic community (Huber, 1995, Denzin, 1997). The experimental (positivist) sciences (physics, chemistry, economics, and psychology) are often seen as the crowning achievements of Western civilization, and in their practices, assumed that “truth” can transcend opinion and personal bias (Carey, 1989, Schwandt, 1997).

In this study, the choice of a mixed method approach reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon been investigated. It is a measured attempt to capture reality and actual representation. It is not triangulation which is a tool or strategy of validation but an alternative to validation (Flick, 2002, 2007). The combination of multiple methodological practices of qual and quant in this study added rigour, breadth complexity, richness, and depth to this inquiry. This aligns with the work of Flick, 2002, 2007). The province of applying a mixed method approach is the world of lived experience, for this is where individual belief and action intersect culture. Under this model, there is no preoccupation with discourse and method as a material interpretive practice that constitute representation and description. This is the textual, narrative turn rejected by the positivists. This opposition is an attack to legislate one version of truth over another.

#### **5.4 Choice of Research Approach for Study**

In selecting the suitable research method for this study, the researcher was guided by the following issues: what set of concepts this study intends to follow in answering the research questions, what is the conceptual status of the items being studied and their connection with each other, from whom the information will be gathered for this study, and what instruments and processes this study will use In answering these questions, this research will implement the two methods sequentially in two stages, suggesting a sequential blended method strategy, based on the reflections of the quantitative and qualitative approach.

Qualitative study was used in the first stage through interviews of employees of the mobile phone companies, while questionnaires was used in the second stage to gather

information from customers of the mobile phone companies) to complement the first stage outcomes. Table 5.2 presents the selection of the research method that will be used to achieve this study's goals.

**Table 5.2: Research technique selection**

<b>Research Objectives</b>	<b>Data/techniques</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Investigate the formation of customer engagement in the mobile telecommunication industry in Nigeria	Interview/Quantitative Survey	For thematic and statistical proof, the interview and survey would produce information.
Explore customer relationships as an antecedent for customer engagement formation	Interview/Quantitative Survey	For thematic and statistical proof, the interview and survey would produce information.
Determine if the engagement customer's form with their mobile providers affects or predicts the type and level of performance	Interview/Quantitative Survey	For thematic and statistical proof, the interview and survey would produce information.

As presented in Table 5.2, The research strategy used in this study enabled the researcher to justify the conceptual framework created, test the research hypothesis and clarify research questions with a view to achieving the study's objectives. The logic of choosing the qualitative and quantitative approach for this study was to gather information and create the connection between customer engagement and company results. The collection of qualitative and quantitative data from employees and customers of the mobile telecoms companies contributes significantly to understanding the changing tastes, preferences and orientation of the mobile telecoms customers in an emerging market and developing nation like Nigeria. The reasons for using the two approaches are stated below.

The significance of using various study methods is to increase the validity of the outcomes and to decrease the potential bias based on a single source of data. In addition, the advantage of using a blended technique resides in the two approaches 'combined ideas (Petter and Gallivan, 2004). Thus, in this study, the usefulness of using the qualitative strategy, using interviews with telecommunications company staff and their customers, will be complementing the outcomes to be achieved from the questionnaires related to one of the research goals-' Investigating customer commitment development.'

The mixed method approach used in this study helped the researcher to counterbalance the weakness of one strategy. Using the quantitative approach in this study helped to reinforce the constraints of the qualitative information in terms of external validity. This research seeks to investigate the nature of the pre-and post-purchase relationship between enhanced customer engagement and company results. A quantitative approach is more appropriate to evaluate the connection between the factors in order to be able to investigate these interactions.

This research involves the collection of appropriate information from a representative sample of the target population (mobile telecommunications companies in four areas of Nigeria), thereby enhancing the study's potential for generalization (Bryman, 2011). A quantitative approach was appropriate in collection of relevant data as enabled the researcher to work within a dynamic business environment and take into account respondents view within a period of time (Petter and Gallivan, 2004).

A quantitative approach is helpful for comparing mobile company customers in Nigeria's four major regions and investigating whether there are important variations in the extent of enhanced customer service delivery, the effect of customer management on business processes, and growth results on general company results. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007) and Creswell (2009), the quantitative approach promotes simple information comparison and is helpful for big information sets collection.

## **5.5 Research population**

Population is defined as "the full collection of instances or community members", according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007, p. 606). Furthermore, Collis and

Hussey (2003, p.100) referred to population as "a body of people or any other collection of items for research purposes". Similarly, Sekaran (2000, p.226) defined population as "the whole group of individuals, occurrences, or interest a researcher would like to explore". Population therefore relates to all group members a researcher is interested in investigating (Burgess, 2001). In this respect, the mobile telecom businesses and customers in Nigeria are the target population of this research.

This study includes the four major mobile telecoms companies located in Nigeria with different customer orientation. Most studies on customer engagement in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria have been based on fieldwork carried out in Lagos, the industrial and economic hub or Abuja the seat of power and political capital; for example Duncombe and Heeks (2002); Galperin (2005); Jesen (2005) and Jagun et.al 2007 are case studies. Due to difficulties in accessing the rural areas of mobile telecoms operations in Nigeria, this study was restricted to mobile telecoms companies and customers within the urban cities of Ikeja, (Lagos State), Sabo Garri,(Kano State), Benin (Edo State) and Onitsha (Anambra State) in Nigeria. These cities represent the West, North, South and Eastern regions of the country.

The reason for choosing these cities as the choice of study location is primarily because they are the commercial capitals and industrial hubs of the major regions of the country, with all the major mobile telecoms companies having their headquarters there (Olokesusi, 2011). These cities are representative of a mini-Nigeria as they reflect the diversity of the country and almost every Nigerian ethnic group is represented in each of them. Furthermore, these towns are important business centres in Nigeria, with a huge population and high numbers of mobile telecoms businesses which continuously increase in both a structured and unorganized market (Olokesusi, 2011). The requirements for inclusion in the target study population should be obviously described and members of the community who fulfil the requirements should be chosen and included in the target population (Dozier and Repper, 1992). Drawing samples from distinct areas was essential for the research to have a representative sample of Nigeria, given the diverse nature of the political economy in Nigeria and the variations that exists between the regions. A map of Nigeria is presented in figure 5.1.

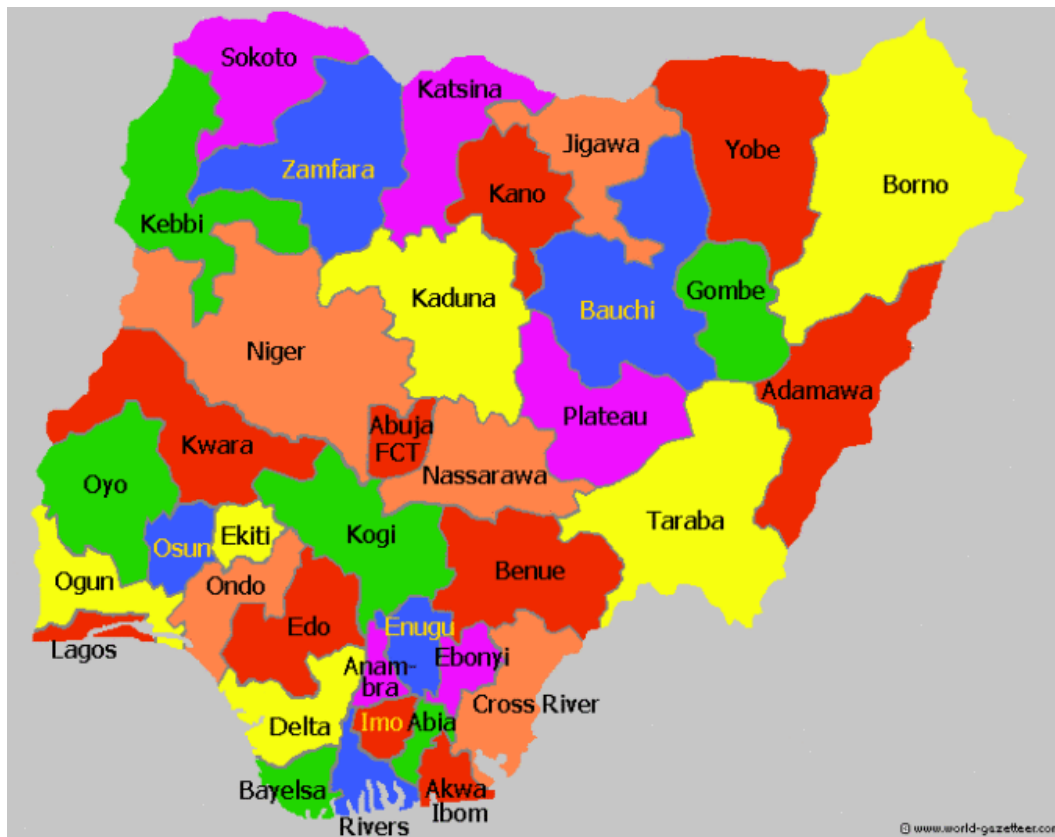


Figure 5.1: Map of Nigeria showing the 36 States and Federal Capital territory

Source: Pyramid, 2016

## 5.6 Sample Size

The sample size choice of a research depends on several variables including available time, cost implication, population heterogeneity, methods of response and evaluation techniques (Bryman, 2011). For a researcher, the time and cost considerations are very crucial as they determine the sort of sampling to be used in the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). According to Creswell (2009), a large sample size cannot ensure precision of outcomes. Furthermore, the researcher determines the sample size based on the available time and resources as well as mistakes anticipated (Finn et al, 2000).

In view of the above, if a low response rate is anticipated, it is to be expected that the researcher would distribute more questionnaires than initially thought. In relation to cost and time considerations, sample size could also be determined based on the

researcher's knowledge. Despite this, there should be no less than 30 participants in the sample size (David and Sutton, 2004; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). The bigger the sample size, the lower the sampling error and the more accurate the findings of the study are in generalizing the population in quantitative studies (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Based on the stats available in Nigeria's mobile telecommunications industry and a very large number of mobile telephone customers, an accurate figure and number of the representative sample was hard to achieve.

To decrease the margin of error, both the researcher and the field assistants hired, managed the administration of the questionnaires. Traveling to all the towns in each region of Nigeria was costly; therefore, the sample size of 220 was split equally between the four selected metropolitan towns of each region to be studied in order to guarantee that each region is proportionally represented within the sample. The interviews with fifteen respondents selected from the staff of the four major mobile telecoms businesses were performed for the qualitative phase.

## **5.7 Response Rate**

The response rate is one of the most significant challenge in a study when questionnaires are used as information collection tool. Using the questionnaire as a study tool for information gathering can rarely provide a complete set of data, except for a response rate of 100 percent (Fogelman and Comber, 2002). The significance of the response rate arises when considering the analytical technique to be used for the information as well as justifying the result's accuracy, validity and reliability (Dillman, Sinclair and Clark, 1993). The response rate is determined by percentage based on the number of questionnaires completed and returned compared to the total amount of questionnaires sent out (Rada, 2005). There are several arguments as to what is acceptable, rational response rate and consequently what is unacceptable, or what may be viewed as acceptable.

Researchers like Church (1993) and Edwards et al (2002) asserted that a small response rate could influence any study's reliability, while others like Dillman (1991) argued that the response rate did not necessarily influence the precision of the survey outcomes. Deutskens et al, (2004), however, indicated that follow-ups and incentives are very significant variables in maximizing reaction rates. In addition, Church (1993) and Dillman (2000) added that in maximizing the response rate, the duration and

presentation of questionnaires were also essential. Many sequential measures were taken in this study to maximize the response rate from the questionnaires used during the fieldwork. Some of the measures include provision of incentives in the form of souvenirs and gifts for participants. In the context of the research location, acts like this are considered as a form of appreciation and not coercion.

To enhance the response rate, the time required to complete the questionnaire was taken into consideration and made it a respondent-friendly design (Dillman, 2000). The participants were briefed on the objective of the research. They were also notified about ethics, issues of anonymity and confidentiality in the process of information collection, data analysis and publication of the study results. The questionnaires were personally handed out to guarantee that when returned they were correctly filled (Kalman, 1988). In addition, some participants received financial incentives and gifts to motivate them. This helped to enhance the response rate (Church, 1993; Dillman, 2000).

## **5.8 Sampling Procedure**

A sample is a subgroup or portion of a bigger population, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012). According to (Bryman, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012), it is impossible to survey all members of the entire population. The preference of the type of sampling method to be used in a study is related to the feasibility and nature of information to be collected, to respond to the research issues set while at the same moment attaining the research goals (Saunders et al, 2012).

There are two kinds of methods for sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling relates to the opportunity or likelihood of selecting each case from the population and is generally linked with strategies for survey and experimental study. Simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, and cluster sampling are the methods engaged in this form of sampling. Non-probability sampling is used if the probability of each case being taken from the complete population is not known and the methods include convenience sampling, quota sampling and purposeful sampling (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

In choosing a sample of staff and customers of mobile telecommunications businesses in the different areas to be included in this research, three characteristics have been



accepted for the selection method, namely: mobile businesses must be a significant player and have more than 20 percent of the market share in the industry (NCC, 2015). This was chosen to limit the scope of the research, thus requiring mobile businesses, staff and customers to fulfil these requirements. Researchers such as Larson (1992) proposed that mobile businesses must be in service for at least five years as a yardstick to effectively start the company and operate it within the constraints to which the company is subjected in order to preserve stability with respect to operational years. Furthermore, the amount of operating years was also regarded to guarantee that mobile company staff could provide precise data about the telecommunications industry's liberalization in Nigeria and their companies.

Convenience sampling is a technique based on information collection from members of the population who are easily accessible to engage in the research. It is a form of sampling where, without extra demands, the first accessible primary data source will be used for studies. In other words, this technique includes getting respondents wherever they can be found and wherever convenient. No inclusion criteria were recognized prior to the choice of topics for convenience sampling. Another reason for using this sampling method is that the mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria do not disclose their customer database to the public, so the researcher was unable to access the data. The questionnaire for this study was adapted from the work of Lu and Shang (2007). However, unlike Lu and Shang (2007), 24 items were chosen instead of 30.

Convenience sampling was selected and used to represent the population of this study and choosing the sample. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), convenient random sampling is appropriate for selecting a sample size greater than a few hundred; if face-to-face contact is needed, it is precise and helpful. The benefit of this sampling method is its sampling simplicity and study facility, information collection can be facilitated in a short time and cost-effectiveness. Its restriction is that it is susceptible to selection bias and sampling error. Face-to-face interviews were conducted for 15 employees of the mobile telecom companies, cutting across senior, middle management and frontline management.

## **5.9 Data Collection Technique**

Depending on the type of information to be gathered, and the selection of the method engaged in obtaining data in a research, Creswell (2009) indicates that the selection of a suitable data collection technique for a research should consider all data collection techniques. Furthermore, it indicated that the selection of method should be chosen based on whether the plan is to predetermine the sort of data to be gathered prior to the research or to allow it to arise from the study respondents. The sort of data collected may be numeric (quantitative) or non-numeric (qualitative) information. Data can be gathered from distinct sources in distinct ways, in varying environments.

Data collection techniques include interviews (face-to-face, telephone, computer-assisted, digital media); questionnaires (personal, mail or electronic questionnaires); individual or event observations (video or audio recording). The information source may be primary or secondary. Primary data involves views on particular information collected from respondents, focus groups, and a group of participants, while secondary data contains business reports, public journals, and website, media, and internet analysis (Sekaran, 2000; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012).

The technique used in a study to collect information is related to the strategy adopted by the studies (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative research uses approaches such as narrative, ethnography, grounded theory surveys, or case studies to collect open-ended, evolving information with the primary objective of creating topics from the information. On the other side, quantitative research uses approaches such as experiments and survey to collect information on predetermined tools that produce statistical data. According to Creswell (2009, p.179), by studying a sample of that population, a study offers a quantitative or numerical description of population trends, attitudes or views. It is used in an extremely economical manner to collect a big quantity of data from a substantial population.

Survey strategy is generally associated with the deductive approach as it enables quantitative data collection, which can then be quantitatively analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. It enables the researcher to be in command of the study method and it is possible to use the gathered information to suggest reasons for interactions between factors and to create relationship models. Surveys assist produce results that can be implemented through a representative sampling of the entire population to an entire population. They could be collecting cross-sectional data

at one stage in time or collecting longitudinal data over time. The information collection methods that will be implemented through survey approach in this research will include questionnaires and semi-structured interview (Bryman, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

### **5.10 Semi-Structured Interview**

This is a method in which the interviewer has the same prepared list of questions for the respondents' to answer. It is carried out within a particular organisational framework. Depending on the flow of conversation between the researcher and interviewee, the order of issues may also differ. The interview is audio-recorded or notes taken (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). The aim of this method is to guarantee that all interviewees are given the same context of questioning in order to be able to reliably aggregate answers from participants (Bryman, 2011). Based on the above debate, interviews were performed from a list of respondent that were willing to engage.

### **5.11 Questionnaires**

This is a collection of predetermined issues intended to gather data from participants. It is an information collection method in which respondents are questioned in a predetermined order to answer the same set of issues (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). The questionnaire is a method of information collection that offers an effective way to gather answers from a big population before quantitative analysis.

There are two kinds of questionnaires: questionnaires self-administered, and questionnaire administered by the interviewer. The self-administered questionnaires are administered electronically (internet or intranet questionnaires); published to and returned by participants (postal or mail questionnaires); or supplied by hand to and subsequently obtained from participants (delivery and collection questionnaires) (Bryman, 2011; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012; and Creswell, 2009). The self-administered questionnaire was implemented after the debate above using the delivery and collection option to guarantee the accuracy of answers. As mentioned by Dillman (2000), self-administered questionnaires participants are comparatively unlikely to respond in any manner just to please the researcher as they think that certain answers are socially desirable (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). This

method was selected based on the sample size. The questionnaire selection is also be affected by the time available for information collection; funds; and accessibility of field assistants to participants. In this research, the benefit of using the questionnaire was that its administration was inexpensive and fast, which is useful as the sample for this research is commonly spread geographically.

### **5.12 Design of Questionnaire**

The questionnaire structure influences both the validity and reliability of the information gathered in a research and the respondents reaction rate (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). In adherence to the basic ethical principles of the questionnaire design, the words used in the questions should be easily understood by all respondents, and their intended meaning should also be clear to the respondents. This is a basic requirement that the researcher should observe to create an efficient questionnaire (Fink, 2003).

The questionnaire was developed to allow the collection of precise information to maximize reliability and validity. Saunders Lewis and Thornhill, 2012 pg.364) clarified that "a valid questionnaire will allow precise information to be gathered, and a credible questionnaire will result in consistent information collection." The questions in the questionnaire were structured to allow adequate measurement of the variables to answer the research questions and achieve the study's goals. According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2007), an effective questionnaire design requires the accumulation of responses on a mixed scale such as the Likert scale to guarantee that all products used to measure the constructs of the research are effective and efficient to guarantee the validity and reliability of the issues.

In this regard, this research used a five-point Likert scale (1-highly disagree; 2-disagree; 3-neutral; 4-highly agree; and 5-highly agree), using the same order of reaction category to prevent confusing the participants (Dillman, 2000). This allowed the participants to indicate their perception of the extent to which they disagree or agree to a sequence of statements contained in the questionnaire. All questions in the questionnaire were predominantly close-ended questions. The closing issues supplied the participants with some alternative responses to choose from (Dillman, 2000) and were created to motivate the participants to finish the questionnaires.

The questionnaire used in this research began with an introduction indicating the purpose of the survey relative to the study goal, while also providing clear directions on how to complete the survey. In addition, the introduction also made clear the confidentiality of data supplied by the participants. The questionnaire was split into five parts. Section 1 requested data on participants and mobile phone companies features. Section 2 concentrated on the evaluation of the mobile telecom businesses by the participants. Section 3 asked questions about variables influencing mobile telecommunications operator customer decision. Section 4 was based on the performance rating on relationship drivers of the mobile telecommunications operator. Section 4 also asked about customer complaints and problems related to customer delivery while Section 5 inquired about respondents' personal information.

### **5.13 Pilot Study**

According to Remenyi and Williams (1998) and Olsen (2004), a pilot study is a small-scale model of the study's actual data collection process to determine the potential limitations, uncertainties and problems that may arise in all aspects of the research process. Therefore, before gathering the information in this study, the pilot study allowed the researcher to create suitable adjustments. The pilot study was performed before the real data (information) was collected. This allowed the researcher to refine the questions contained in the questionnaire so that the respondent has no issue answering the questions and eliminating any information that may be subject to confidentiality or anonymity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

Pilot testing allowed the researcher to evaluate the validity of the issues and the accuracy of the information to be gathered (Bryman, 2011). The number of participants used in a pilot test depends on the research questions, objectives, available time, financial resources and how well the original questionnaire was intended and designed (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Two stages of pilot testing was conducted in this research. In March 2016, the first stage was conducted when the researcher travelled to Nigeria to identify suitable participants who would be used for information collection. Some of the prospective participants were approached to inform them of the intention of the researcher to conduct the study. The respondent's comments, remarks, suggestions and recommendations were observed during the pilot study. These include time required to complete the questionnaire, clarity of instructions,

confidentiality and other questions that might cause the participants to feel uncomfortable. All remarks and suggestions were taken into consideration and incorporated.

#### **5.14 Data Coding and Screening**

Before quantitative assessment, data coding is a significant element (Gilbert, 2008). Codes are the theory or building blocks that implicitly or explicitly embody the fundamental data analysis assumptions in studies as well as the basis on which the analyst arguments are based. The primary objective of coding in this study is to translate the respondent's answers for subsequent statistical analysis into numbers. Information obtained from questionnaires for field research was entered in a codebook before it was used in statistical software (Pallant, 2005).

Defining and weighing each of the factors and assigning numbers to each of the possible answers fit the codebook for this research. The codebook was registered and stored as a guide to subsequent applications in a computer file (Gilbert, 2008). Following data collection, coding was done as the researcher was uncertain of the respondents probable answers (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). The following steps was taken; developing a pre-coded framework; producing the codebook and coding guidelines, scheduling the questionnaires; transferring the values to a computer and checking and screening the information (Fieldman, 2008). The actual codes used in this study were numerical; mutually exclusive; exhaustive and enforced continually (Gilbert, 2001).

A distinctive variable name was provided to each participant in the questionnaire and each respondent had a full set of values for each of the variables. This led to a data file being generated. A numbered Microsoft Excel program prepared the data file for this study, so that the rows correspond to the response of each respondent and the columns correspond to each variable. For analysis, the data file on the Excel spreadsheet was imported into SPSS. The information for this research was gathered from staff and customers of mobile telecommunications businesses from the four main players in the industry and four towns covering Nigeria's major geographical regions.

Researchers are interested in evaluating the suitability of the data to verify that they align with known conventions and statistical standards before proceeding with the

analysis process (Hair et al, 2003). In order to prevent illogical results or partial results from incorrect findings, a data check was carried out for completeness and consistency (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). According to Hair et al (1998), any violation of the circumstances and responsibilities of the measurement will result in partial results or non-significant interactions between the factors of the research. For screening information, academics normally use outliers and out-of-range values.

This research used some statistical tests, such as missing information. Missing information results from the inability of a respondent to answer a question, either inadvertently or because they do not want to answer it (Bryman, 2011). Missing information occurs either during information collection or due to issues with data entry and may affect the validity of the research results. The missing values were identified in this research by inspecting the frequencies within each variable for each participant. When the codes were entered into the SPSS software, they were detected.

### **5.15 Data Analysis Techniques**

A thematic analysis was used to analyse and interpret the qualitative information from this research. With descriptive and inferential statistics, the quantitative data were analysed and interpreted. Statistical software application has been used in this respect, SPSS supporting quantitative data analysis. There are two kinds of statistical analysis: descriptive and inferential (Sekaran, 2000) statistics. Below are discussed the statistical techniques and qualitative methods used to analyse the information for this research.

### **5.16 Reliability Analysis**

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2007), reliability refers to the extent to which a measuring instrument contains variable errors, i.e. errors that appear to be inconsistent between observations either during a single measuring procedure or each time a given variable is measured by the same instrument. Accordingly, reliability is the proportion of the actual score variance to the entire measuring instrument. The most frequently used is the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. Descriptive statistics enable scientists to efficiently and meaningfully summarize and organize information. By interpreting information patterns, inferential statistics enable scientists to create choices or inferences.

### **5.17 Reliability measure**

The Cronbach coefficient is the instrument's inner consistency indicator and values range from 0 to 1. A 0-value Cronbach coefficient refers to no inner reliability and 1 refers to perfect inner reliability (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007). According to Pikkarainen et al, (2004), although reduced values are used in some literature, 0.7 is the acceptable reliability coefficient. This research used Cronbach Alpha to assess the reliability of the indices that measure the magnitude of the effect of customer engagement on mobile telecoms performance.

### **5.18 Frequency and Percentages**

After information coding and processing, the first step a researcher takes is to build frequency distributions to examine all the factors considered in the research (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007). Frequencies refers to the number of occurrences of distinct subcategories (Sekeran, 2000). The distribution of frequencies shows a table for a variable displaying the amount and percentages in each variable category. In this research, frequencies and percentages were used to assist define the sample for most factors, such as respondents attributes (age, gender, level of revenue, level of education, occupation).

### **5.19 Secondary data**

This technique of collecting information is basically a reference to past and current content. Such data may be company information, and other text-based or part of computerized business database. In this study, secondary data was obtained from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the National Statistics Office's websites, books, journals and annual published reports.

### **5.20 Ethical consideration**

All ethical problems was duly considered in accordance with university regulations. Research participants were also primarily concerned with these problems. All participants' concerns regarding the confidentiality of the data they shared in the studies were discussed and agreed. In line with university regulations and procedures, they were given guarantees about this. Ethical consideration is an important issue as



it can impact on respondents' involvement. Sheehan and Hoy (1999) advocates that when conditions of anonymity are available to participants, acceptance, cooperation and contribution of the respondents is greatly enhanced.

### **5.21 Difficulties experienced**

A significant issue that the researcher experienced during this study is the issue of collecting secondary data. The collection of secondary data was hampered as the mobile telecoms companies did not have an accessible data for information needed. In addition, where the information was accessible, it was outdated and not applicable to the research. Furthermore, the researcher made effort to obtain access to mobile telecommunications development data in Nigeria through the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), but owing to administrative bottlenecks and bureaucracy, the information available could not be readily sourced by the researcher. This was a major challenge.

Another challenge the researcher experienced during the fieldwork was sampling. Since no information was available regarding the actual number of mobile phone companies customers in the different regions of Nigeria, the researcher found it challenging to ensure a representative sample of the target population was used in the survey. In addition, the researcher had to make several journeys to the locations in order to get a convenient time for the interviews to be conducted. The employees of the mobile telecoms companies had very busy schedules.

The researcher also had problems with traveling around different regions of Nigeria. The insurgency in the northern part of the country meant that security was a major concern. The researcher also experienced financial limitations related to the research field assistants. Also, some of the participants in the research requested monetary compensation for their time. The researcher did provide some incentives with souvenirs and cash gifts in some instances to motivate participants to complete the questionnaires.

Finally, some of the participants were not interested in sharing their data because they were concerned about the study's anonymity. This was despite all the assurances and guarantees the researcher provided.

## **5.22 Thematic Analysis**

For this study, qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interview of Executives of the four major mobile telecoms companies in Nigeria. Participants for the interview were 15 senior, middle and frontline executives of the various companies. 20 executives was initially earmarked, but interviews was stopped when saturation point was reached. The qualitative data was audio-recorded, and this was later transcribed and fed into the NVivo software. NVivo helped to developed various themes. This themes were developed using frames from the variables in the conceptual framework. The frames were the basis for the interview questions that was used to solicit responses from the participants. Each was coded as P1, P2, P3, P4,P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, and P15. The mobile company where they work was not indicated. Using NVivo, the themes was analysed and coded as: CMRC - The impact of communication methods in retaining customers; OPSMS - The impact of online processes to increase sales and marketing strategies.; RSLSD - The impact of retail shop location in service delivery; EEC - The impact of employee engagement on customer behaviour. CF- The impact of customer feedback; NFDO - The impact of negative feedback and design offers. This is shown in Table 6.1.

## **5.23 Summary of chapter**

This chapter has defined the specific attribute of the study. The research approach was presented as well as data collection techniques. A mixed method was the selected approach for the study. It involved the use of qualitative and quantitative techniques in sequence.

Firstly, the study used a semi-structured face to face interview of 15 employees of the four major mobile companies in Nigeria. These employees included senior and middle management as well as frontline staff. The interviews were done during fieldwork in Nigeria.

Secondly, the study adopted a survey strategy, using a questionnaire which was self-administered to 220 customers (mobile phone subscribers) of the four major mobile telecoms firms These participants were chosen using the convenient sampling technique. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential

techniques to analyse the respondent's views using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS).

Overall, the chapter sets the study within current research traditions and methodology in business research. A mixed-methods study was used to collect relevant data and secondary data identified by the systematic review of literature was collected from journals, books, reports and other online resources. This chapter has presented the research methodology for this study. The approaches and sampling techniques used was also discussed. The limitations and difficulties encountered during the research were also highlighted. In addition, the ethical consideration of the study was presented. In the next two chapters, the data collected from the fieldwork in Nigeria is analysed and findings discussed.

## **Chapter Six – Qualitative Data Analysis and Discussion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In Chapter five, the research methodology and data collection methods of this study were presented. This was undertaken to provide an in-depth description of the methods employed in this study and the justification for using the chosen methods. In summary, the research methodology chapter provided a preliminary introduction to the empirical stage of this research.

This study investigates how customer engagement affect business performance in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria. This is to be achieved through the study of the four major mobile telecoms companies. In order to achieve the set objectives of this study as stated in Chapter One, this chapter and the next seeks to provide answers to the research questions which were earlier set out in Section 1.6 of Chapter One.

The next two chapters presents the qualitative and quantitative data from the study. It is about analysis of interviewees attribute data, as well as primary and secondary data from field survey in Nigeria. The chapters present the rules in the process of selecting actual themes, analysis of participants attribute data and the main data of the study, interpretations to support the thematic findings of the qualitative study and statistical analysis of the quantitative data.

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the data collected from a sample of employees and customers of the four main mobile telecoms companies in Nigeria. This chapter is structured as follows. Section 6.2 describes the selection of themes; Section 6.3 presents description of interviewees and Section 6.4 shows the thematic analysis followed by the chapter summary in Section 6.5.

### **6.2 Selection of themes**

It presents the analysis and findings of the data collected from semi structured interview of a sample of fifteen executives of the four main mobile phone companies in Nigeria. A semi structured interview was conducted for this study. The interviewees are executives working currently for the four major telecoms companies in Nigeria. To maintain confidentiality, their identities is not revealed but referred to as Participants 1,2,3,4 and so on respectively throughout the analysis and discussion.

The design of the questionnaires originated from the interview questions. This enabled a simple comparison between the questionnaire responses and the interview responses. Before the beginning of the interview, the study participants were familiarized with the objectives of the research and each of the interviewees was encouraged to convey their candid view after which they were requested to answer the questions. For the other interviewee not to be biased, this method was repeated the same way.

### **6.3 Description of Interviewees**

The interviewees were chosen from the four major mobile telecoms companies in Nigeria. The interviewees were selected based on their willingness to participate in a face to face interview. All the participants were executives of the mobile telecoms companies with over three years working experience. This was indicated through contacts made with them through the Human resources departments of the companies. The participants were based in Lagos, Edo, Enugu and Kano States of Nigeria. Eight of the fifteen participants were based in Lagos which is the commercial hub of the country while the remaining seven participants had their offices in the other three states. Finally, at the time of the interview, all the participants were employees of the mobile telecom companies.

In addition, the results presented in this section are focused on explaining the impact of customer engagement on the performance of mobile telecoms companies as discussed by fifteen executives during the semi-structured interviews. Table 6.1 shows the themes developed on the impact of customer engagement on business performance. The following sub-sections discuss these themes in detail.

**Table 6.1: Themes from survey interviews**

Themes on impact of customer engagement	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
<b>CMRC</b>			X			X		X		X	X	X	X		X
<b>OPSMS</b>	X	X	X	X			X		X	X			X		X
<b>RSLSD</b>			X	X		X				X			X		X
<b>EEC</b>	X			X		X			X	X	X				X
<b>CF</b>			X		X					X	X	X	X		X
<b>NFDO</b>			X		X	X	X	X			X			X	

**Notes: P-Participants**

**CMRC**- The impact of communication methods in retaining customers; **OPSMS**- The impact of online processes to increase sales and marketing strategies.; **RSLSD**- The impact of retail shop location in service delivery; **EEC**- The impact of employee engagement on customer behaviour. **CF**- The impact of customer feedback; **NFDO**- The impact of negative feedback and design offers.

## 6.4 Analysis of Interviews

The significant role of customer engagement in enhancing business performance was discussed in Chapter Three. Moreover, it was argued that the primary objective of the mobile telecom's companies in Nigeria's highly competitive market is delivering quality products and services to their customers. The continued success of these companies is not hinged only on the quantity of offerings made available to their customers but dependent on sustainability of quality and quantity of customers retained, new ones added, and relationships developed. The quality and volume of feedback information received from both the existing and new customers and how they are utilised for business operations and processes is significant to the growth of the business (Porter, 2000).

#### **6.4.1 Impact of communication methods to enhance business performance**

In total, eight of the company managers out of a total of fifteen stated that communication techniques promote customer retention and have improved their business efficiency and performance. Text descriptions of the interview of some respondents are shown below:

Participant 3:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*"...Both telephony and mails are used to interact with customers and evaluate their feedback. Our staff have become more productive in carrying out their functions in terms of product and services we offer as a result, This increases the level of confidence of customers in the services provided by the company, thus enabling customers to introduce their friends to us on the basis of the quality of the services rendered.."*

Participant 6:

An executive of another telecoms firm stated in response to the interview, that the use of communication methods has enhanced their business performance:

*"...We engage our customers by short message service popularly known as SMS. It is our preferred mode of communication with customers because it is cheaper and could be achieved in a shorter time compared to calling. On feedback I can say it is great because most of our products and services are first told to our customers through SMS and the response have been amazing."*

Participant 10:

An executive stated in response to the interview, that the use of communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*"...We communicate with our customers on both voice calls and SMS. This combination is cheaper and faster and can reach so many customers at the same time. Our staff are well trained in handling customers especially in voice calls. Most customers often telephone us to give them support them in using their mobile phones and our staff by sharing their knowledge are able to resolve their queries over the telephone and if it is unresolved, we request the customer to physically come over to our retail outlets so we can help out, this in turn allows us to have personal contact with customers. This has helped increased the customer base of our business, attracting people based on the quality of the services offered".*

Participant 11:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*"...SMS is our most preferable method of communication with our customers though sometimes we call depending on the urgency and importance of the reason of the issue, as for feedback we have several feedback channels, and I can say that our feedback is great because we have so many customers who reply us frequently".*

Participant 13:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*"...SMS is our most used method to contact our customers because it enables us to send messages to many customers at once. Feedback is very good because we get loads of responses from customers."*

Participant 15:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:



*“...SMS is our most used method to contact our customers except in cases where we might want to get instant feedback from customers, then we put calls through to them. For feedback I can say pretty good because we get very high number of responses from customers.”*

Participant 8:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*“...We use both sms and voice calls though sms is a cheaper and very fast method of reaching so many customers at the same time. Feedback is great and unbelievable because in both cases it is instant received.”*

Participant 12:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that communication methods has enhanced business performance:

*“...SMS is our most preferred way because it can reach more people in a relatively shorter time, since most of our customers are social media inclined. Otherwise email would have been a cheaper and faster way to communicate but because we want to be sure our adverts and promos gets the end users, we deploy sms as a more reliable means of communication.”*

In analysing the interviews, it was found that the use of communication methods facilitates relationship between the mobile phone companies and customers. This relationship creates a channel for feedback for the mobile telecoms companies which in turn enhances their business performance. Given that mobile phone companies use communication methods to engage with their customers and acquire feedback (Duncombe and Heeks, 2002), the findings of this study, based on the response of the interviewees, support Chetty and Campbell-Hunt (2003) that businesses through their networks of customers exchange information that is beneficial for their business performance. This result is in line with Bhavnani et al. (2008) that the use of communication methods by mobile phone companies

facilitates vital information exchange, which stimulates market efficiency and is significant to the growth of the business.

#### **6.4.2 The impact of online processes on sales and marketing to enhance business performances**

As stated in Chapter Three, online processes seems to be the easiest and most affordable means of engagement with customers for mobile telecoms businesses in order to stay in contact with customers within the business environment of a developing economy (Donner, 2008). By providing a medium for consumers in the market it becomes easy for the mobile telecoms companies to constantly relate and interact with both their existing and new customers who are interested in carrying out business transactions. In effect, the engagement with more customers in the business should be reflected in its enhanced business performance. The results reveal that customer engagement activity is influence using online platforms both for already existing customers and new customers. This significantly enhances the performance of the mobile telecoms' businesses. The analysis below illustrates this finding.

In general, nine of the interviewees mentioned that the use of online platforms, portals and processes increase sales and improve marketing strategies, and hence their business performance.

Participant 1:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*"...Our online purchasing processes via our website and other e-channels are very robust and easy so that anyone can easily make purchases to the point of checkout without being stressed up, while our purchasing processes in out outlets is handled by well trained staff to ensure that the needs of customers are met."*

Participant 4:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...We do online direct sales mostly at our friendship centres and are based on product type, like phones, sim card and recharge cards. Our other product and services like prepaid, post-paid services and data sale is channelled through our IT and marketing departments. Both departments create our user-friendly online sales interface for customers.”*

Participant 2:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...Our online processes are designed for interactions with customers, both new and existing ones. We have them at our website and friendship centres. We can also carry out marketing activities and sales of products and services”.*

Participant 7:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...For our online processes we ensure stable network at all times and ensure the processes are simple and easy to use. Timely delivery is key too with respect to reaching our sales outlets, distributors and promoters in the market”*

Participant 9:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...We try as much as possible to make online processes seamless, easy to navigate and carry out instant deliveries to customers. Effort is made to ensure that products are always available”.*

Participant 15:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...Online purchasing processes are handled by marketing and sales personnel via our website and sales portal. We design our website in a very simple way such that customers who are not too computer and internet savvy find it easy to navigate and access our portal and have access to our wide range of products and services”.*

Participant 13:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...For us this is a whole process entirely because it starts from problem recognition, which is that stage where the customer identifies a need and goes online to search for it, which brings us to a point where the customer is able to check our product and service availability and helps them in making their purchase decision. On our part we tend to make the process easy so as not to discourage customers or intending customers”.*

Participant 10:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...Our online processes are designed in a way as to support and complement our direct sales outlets. The process also enables us to provide discounts easily for our teeming customers at the click of a button. We do such discounts to encourage both our new and existing customers and promote repeat purchases”.*

Participant 3:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that online processes increase business performance:

*“...We put our customers` convenience as priority. Knowing that many customers are not too computer literate or savvy especially the older generation, we attempt to put out a user-friendly interface on our web pages for ease of navigation. We make every effort to make our websites very user-friendly and easy to navigate so that the customers do not get put off.”*

#### **6.4.3 The impact of retail shop location in service delivery and on business performance**

As stated in Chapter Three, location of a business goes a long way in enhancing business processes. It is the easiest and most affordable means of engagement with customers for mobile telecoms businesses in order to stay in contact with customers within the business environment of a developing economy (Donner, 2008). By providing a medium for consumers in the market it becomes easy for the mobile telecoms companies to constantly relate and interact with both their existing and new customers who are interested in carrying out business transactions. In effect, the engagement with more customers in the business should be reflected in its enhanced business performance. The responses from respondents reveals that the use of online platforms by the mobile telecoms companies has a great impact on their engagement with customer. The results reveal that customer engagement activity is influence using online platforms both for already existing customers and new customers. This significantly enhances the performance of the mobile telecoms` businesses. The analysis below illustrates this finding.

In general, six of the interviewees mentioned that the use of online platforms, portals and processes increase sales and improve marketing strategies, and hence their business performance.

Participant 15:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...We always ensure our retail shops are located at places where customers are comfortable with. Our shops are given utmost design that shows company colours to differentiate us from our competitors the moment the customer steps in. It is more*

*like entering our world because everything you will find is fully branded with our company name and logo. Virtually everything like seats, writing pen, drinking cups etcetera”.*

Participant 6:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...First and foremost, we use a location that is generally accepted talking about the environment then we look at branding issues which differentiate us from our main rivals in the market. We ensure we fit our shop in such a way that customers are always comfortable”.*

Participant 3:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...We go to great length to beautify our store. Our focus always is that the business ambience is very conducive for customer comfort and comportment. This serene environment gives our customers so much comfort and relaxation”.*

Participant 10:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...We put in a lot to enhance our stores and outlets and make the atmosphere is welcoming. We are also very conscious of the design of the stores in line with our branding strategy. We recognise that the value of cannot be over-emphasized being an integral part of our marketing”.*

Participant 13:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...We look for very conducive atmosphere and we take very seriously branding of our outlets both internally and externally. We know very well that branding creates visibility and a clear differentiation of our brand. We are so detailed in this regard that such basics like lighting, chairs and tables, noise levels, air quality and organisation of our personnel are done in a such a way as to promote our overall brand performance”.*

Participant 4:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, that retail shop location improves business performance:

*“...To a large extent, we make our shop environment attractive and hygienic enough to enhance customer comfort and satisfaction. We do very sleek designs of the shop showcasing our unique style as a company. We also have specialist designated friendship centres. These FC's are properly equipped with state-of-art facilities which enables our customers to interface with our staff as quickly as possible”.*

#### **6.4.4 The impact of employee engagement with customers on the business performance**

As stated in Chapter Three, employee engagement with customers is one of the easiest and most affordable means of engagement with customers for mobile telecoms businesses in order to stay in contact with customers within the business environment of a developing economy (Donner, 2008). By offering a medium for consumers on the market, it becomes simple for mobile telecom businesses to communicate with their current and new customers who are interested in conducting company operations on an ongoing basis. In fact, its improved company performance should reflect involvement with more customers in the company. As presented in the analysis it was shown that the majority of the respondents' revealed

that employee engagement by the mobile telecoms companies has a great impact on customer. In addition, the results reveal that customer engagement activity greatly influence using online platforms both for already existing customers and new customers. This significantly enhances the performance of the mobile telecoms' businesses. The responses from participants analysis below illustrates this finding.

In general, seven of the interviewees mentioned that the use of employee engagements with customers increase sales and improve marketing strategies, and hence their business performance.

Participant 1:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance:

*"...Our experienced managers and customer service staff go a long way in enhancing the products and services we offer to customers. Employees provide advice to customers about our products".*

Participant 4:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance:

*"...Well I will say due to the experienced staff we have; we have been able to retain a large percentage of our customers and also it has made it easier for us effectively market our products and services."*

Participant 9:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance:

*"...In our business, our employees are the major drivers of our success. As the first point of contact between the company and customers, they ensure that customer needs are met in the most appropriate and efficient manner."*



Participant 11:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance

*"...Our employees play a key role in offering our products and services to customers. It is totally dependent on them to interpret every product for our customers and ensure that customers understand various products benefits and services which are available."*

Participant 10:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance

*"...Our employees are the soul of our business. They determine the growth of the business as they are always in direct contact with the customers."*

Participant 6:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance:

*"... Yes, I can tell you that having experienced managers and customer services staff is vital to our business. For all our products and services to do well in the market as anticipated, they (the employees) are the driving force".*

Participant 15:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how employee's engagement with customers enhance business performance

*"...Employees engaging with customers makes it easy run our kind of highly customer-centric business especially in the area of sales of products and services."*

#### **6.4.5 The impact of customer feedback on business performance**

Participant 3:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...We take our customer feedback very seriously. We have a marketing intelligence department; this is a trade secret am letting out now, and I hope I don’t get sacked for this. This unit is tasked with the responsibility of developing our company-customer interface strategies, collate customer feedback and reactions and process such feedbacks into our business strategy and operations. This direct feedback mechanism helps us to maintain very cordial relationships with customers, both new and existing ones thus keeping us ahead of our competitors in the market”.*

Participant 15:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...We specially use the feedback from our customers in the roll out of new products and services. The feedback enables us to provide our customers the specific type of products they desire”.*

Participant 10:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...Our marketing intelligence and quality assurance team rely heavily on customer feedback in the development of better products and services for the market. We have used the technique in such aspect as network coverage and signalling, network traffic, and even pricing. We are able to deliver products and services at prices that are not high for our teeming customers compared to those of our main*

*competitors. Essentially, feedback from our customers is something we cannot do without.”.*

Participant 11:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...We use customer feedback and reactions to gain their attention and modify our products and services both in terms of availability, pricing and comparison with what our competitors are doing. This has greatly enhanced the performance of our business”.*

Participant 13:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...Customer feedback has helped in improving our business performance. For instance, in the last two years, through customer feedback, we have been to develop four strategies”. #1. Establish rapport with both customers and prospects. #2. Build trust with our customers. #3. Talk to the right people which is the multiplier effect that generates positive word of mouth for our products and services. #4. Keep the door open even for customers who have not done a transaction with us”.*

Participant 5:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...This may sound rather untoward, but truth is we also get feedback about our competitors from customers who use multiple networks. They give vital information about what our competitors are doing and offering. Such insights enable us to improve our business performance and give us an edge over our rivals in the market”.*

Participant 12:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how customer feedback enhances business performance:

*“...Customer feedback has help us to effectively monitor competitors and fix prices for our products and services which are pocket-friendly and eye catching. This has made our prices the best you can find around”.*

#### **6.4.6 The impact of negative feedback and design of offers on business performance**

In general, seven of the interviewees stated that the use of negative feedback from customers has enhanced their understanding of the market, activities of their competitors, creation of new products and offers for their customers.

Participant 3:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...Negative customer feedback has help us get vital information on our brand performance in the marketplace. We use such feedback to design product offerings anchored on affordability for our customers, where we make them happy about what they pay for our product and services. We have been able to use negative feedback from customers to provide discounts and bonanzas for our customers especially at seasonal periods of the year such as Christmas, New year celebrations, Easter, Muslim festivals and other Nigerian traditional festivals. These are periods where we envisage customers make huge voice calls, text messaging and expend high volumes of data. The negative feedbacks from our customers have also helped our advertising and promotional strategies. Thus, we are heavily involved in advertising our products and services using various mediums and sales promotional activities. We rely on social media viz Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and others to promote our brand. The results have been outstanding with respect to our bottom-line”.*

Participant 6:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...Negative feedback has allowed us to develop different products and services like the one we call crap value. It’s a product for customers that enable them to get more airtime for both voice calls and data. We were also able to develop another we call the beta talk which is a tariff plan which gives consumers 250% bonus airtime on every recharge. We were also able to develop a service in collaboration with major banks that enables customers to buy airtime for themselves, family and friends”.*

Participant 8:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...This has enabled us to develop best competitive prices. We have been able to give new customers start up discounts and reward existing customers as well with same. It was negative feedbacks that prompted us to develop our easy flex, a tariff which allows our customers to remain on a very low tariff plan. We also have Easy blaze data plan which gives lower tariff plan in different sizes and prices for students and young people. The feedback has also made us to carry out regular services and equipment upgrade to meet customer requirements”.*

Participant 14:

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...It has allowed us to do regular checks on all our products and services. On receiving these feedbacks, we send our staff to do comparison shopping so as to*

*find out the difference between our products and services and those of our competitors. We have therefore been able to design our calling plans, airtime, messaging and data from careful planning. We are able to take marketing and strategic decisions based on index like demographics of our customers such as income, age etc. We then roll out our offers to target each segment. We have developed a 3-way brand enhancement system as follows: 1. Educate customers after they ask questions about our company. We make sure that we take time to answer them in a helpful way. 2. Entertain customers. We do a lot of road shows and campaigns to keep our customers entertained. 3. Deliver WOW experience by creating services that will give us the cutting edge and make us stay ahead of our competitors in the market. This we do through our unbeatable price tariffs.”*

Participant:11

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...It is negative feedback that we use to periodically review our market trends. For example, we were the first network in Nigeria to migrate from the per minute billing to per second billing. Customers have always told about challenges on our network and we believe and act accordingly. They talk to us about network or signal problems, in-call disconnections, unwarranted charges as well as connectivity problems and we immediately deal with them.”*

Participant:7

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...It is negative customer feedback that our company have developed so many products and services, some for personal use, and others for corporate usage. For instance, one of our products that is really in high demand is our Closed User Group*

*(CUG) calling and data plan which a lot of big corporations and multinational companies in Nigeria are using.”*

Participant:4

An executive of the mobile telecoms company in response to the interview, on how they use negative customer feedback and design of offers on business performance:

*“...I will say that but for negative we would not be where we are today. It has made us provide different products like our premier pack which gives more time for voice calls (local and international) and on data. We were also able to produce data subscription offers like Browse chew which focuses on the use of internet by buying data bundles”.*

## **6.5 Summary of chapter**

This chapter analysed participants response from field study and provided qualitative support to the propositions presented in Chapters three and four. In addition, this chapter provided a profile of fifteen Executives from the four major telecoms businesses in Nigeria through analysis of themes relating to the research objectives. This chapter articulated qualitatively the constructs of the research that were outlined previously in conceptual terms through thematic analysis of information. Secondly, in this chapter, the findings of the study have been synthesized into a generalizable pattern by maximizing the significance of the experience of individual executives in corroborating empirical findings. These study results can therefore provide useful reference points through which mobile telecommunications companies can examine and reinforce their competitive position, as well as boost their level of profit in the marketplace and highly competitive business environment.

## Chapter 7 – Quantitative Data Analysis and Discussion

### 7.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, the qualitative data was analysed, and themes developed with discussions. This chapter is focused on analysis and discussion of the quantitative data. It is structured as follows. Section 7.1 describes the profile of the respondents used for the data analysis. Section 7.2 presents the characteristics of mobile phone operators service delivery. Section 7.3 provides characteristics of different service offerings ratings. Section 7.4 presents fundamental questions about customer contact. Section 7.5 presents demographic information. Section 7.6 presents the relationship drivers. Section 7.7 offers a summary and discussion of the results. Section 7.8 provides a summary to the chapter.

### 7.2 Profile of respondents used for quantitative data analysis

The data used in this research was generated using the questionnaire designed for the survey of both Executives of the mobile telephone companies and their customers in Nigeria. Field Assistants, who are recent graduates from the university, were employed for the administration of the questionnaires at varied locations in Lagos Nigeria to ensure that representative sample of the population is captured. The quantitative data analysis of the research findings was based on a total of 196 valid respondents which were obtained from the areas under study in Nigeria. The overall response rate for this study was 82%, which is considered good and is expected to enable this research to make generalised findings regarding customer engagement, mobile telecoms and business performance in Nigeria, provided the findings in each of the areas under study, as these areas are a true representation of the study location. The response rate of respondents is presented in Table 7.1 below

**Table 7.1 - Response rate of the respondents**

Questionnaires sent out	Questionnaires returned	Questionnaires used for analysis	Response rate %
220	205	196	82

Source: Field survey, 2017

As shown in Table 7.1, the response rate for this study is 82%, which is good when compared to other related studies in the telecom industry. Dholakia and



Kshetri (2004) obtained only 11% response rate when they used a random sample to collect data from mobile phone companies that provide internet-based services to consumers. Other researchers in this industry achieved similar response rates. For example, Rabayah and Qalalwi (2011) obtained 92.2% of responses using a stratified sample to collect data from customers on the impact of mobile phone data services on developing countries small and medium companies. Wamuyu and Maharaj (2011) achieved a response rate of 94.9% and a non-response rate of 5.1% using a stratified sample to collect data from customers of the mobile phone companies. As indicated in table 7.1, 205 questionnaires were returned, however, only 196 were used in the analyses. Twenty-four questionnaires were not included in the analysis because they did not meet criteria for acceptance due to errors and ambiguity shown in the filled forms by the respondents. This was discussed in Chapter five and adopted for this study.

Respondents were identified using a convenient random sampling technique, while also bearing in mind the criterion for sample selection. In addition, some measures, such as ensuring the customers chosen were not clustered from a mobile phone company activity. This was considered to ensure some degree of spread within the areas chosen for the study was achieved. Furthermore, the responses obtained were good and this can be attributed to the face to face method of questionnaire administration used, in which the field assistants distributed questionnaires, waited and/or returned shortly thereafter to collect them. This was quite tedious and expensive, but that was the only reliable way to obtain a good response rate.

### **7.3 Characteristics of respondents**

As discussed in Section 7.2, 196 responses were obtained for the study's questions. The characteristics of the respondents are presented in frequency and percentage terms. At the time of this survey, all the mobile phone companies were in business; were still trading and none were on the verge of closing.

### 7.3.1 Personal characteristics of respondents

This section presents a profile of the personal characteristics of the 196 respondents, the customers of the four mobile telephone companies surveyed. The results from the analysis of the personal characteristics of the respondents provide general information about the customers of the four mobile telephone companies. The characteristics analysed include the respondents' age, gender, educational background, employment status and their income.

**Table 7.2 – Mobile Phone provider**

Operator	Frequency	Percent
Mtn	56	28.6
Glo	32	16.3
Etisalat (9mobile)	48	24.5
Airtel	60	30.6
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

30 percent of the respondent for this study were from Airtel Nigeria Ltd, followed by MTN which had 28.6%.

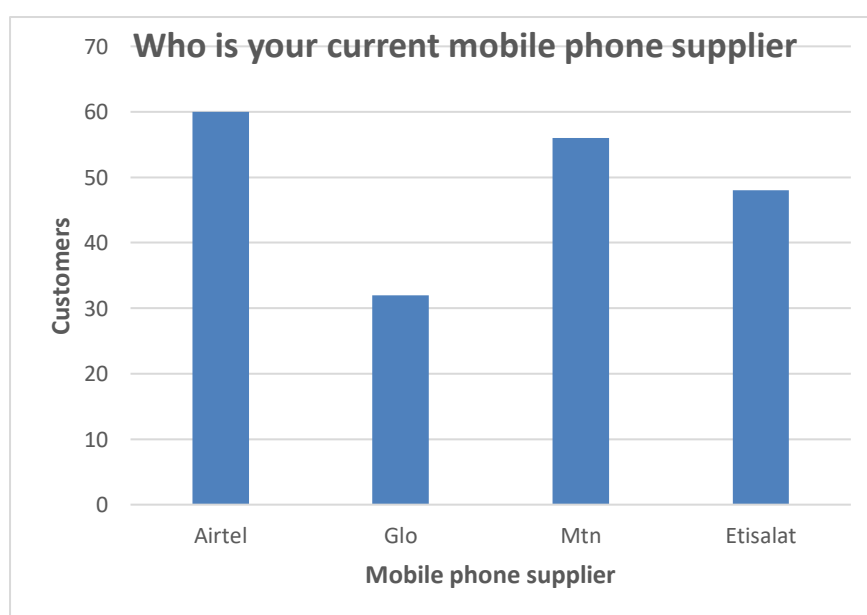


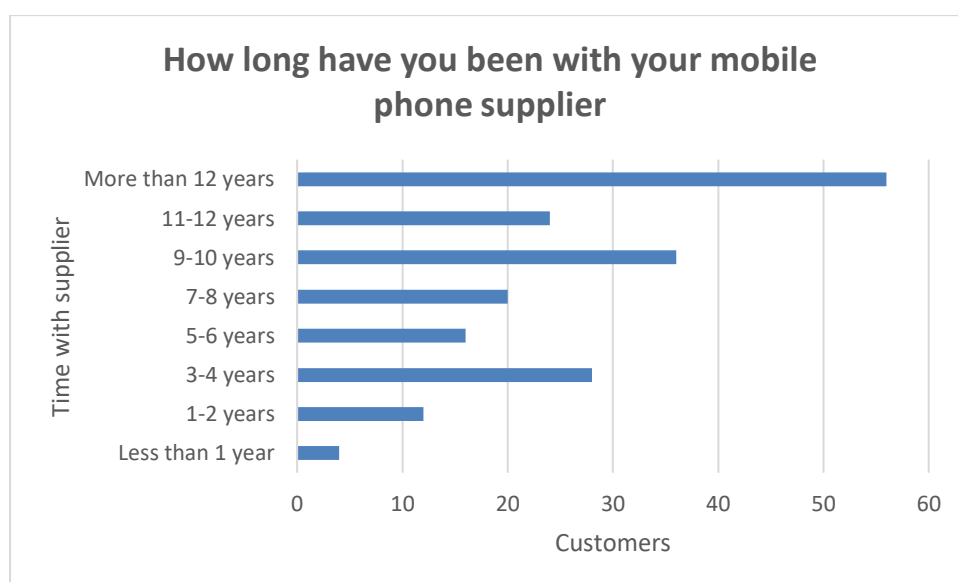
Figure 7.1 Mobile phone providers

**Table 7.3 – Time with provider**

<b>Time (Years)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1	4	2.0
1-2	12	6.1
3-4	28	14.3
5-6	16	8.2
7-8	20	10.2
9-10	36	18.4
11-12	24	12.2
More than 12	56	28.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2017

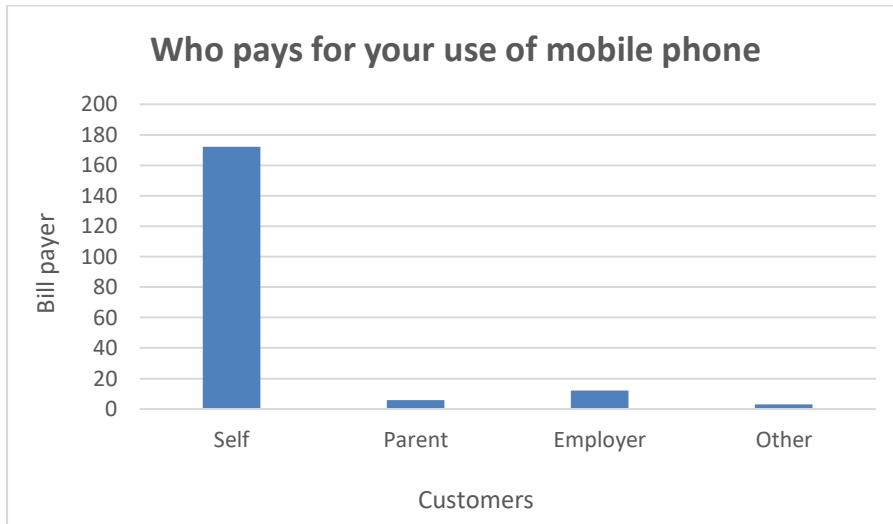
The outcome of the research shows that 28.6% of the respondents has been with their mobile phone for over 12 years. This shows a small percentage of retention and indicative of the movement of the customers from one mobile phone supplier to the other.

**Figure 7.2: Time with provider****Table 7.4 – Bill payer**

<b>Payer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Self	172	97.8
Parent	6	3.1
Employer	12	6.1
Other	3	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2017

As shown from the table above, 97.8 percent of the mobile phone customers pay for the services on their own.



**Figure 7.3 Mobile phone bill payer**

#### 7.4 Reliability measure

In this study the Cronbach coefficient was used to determine the internal consistency of the instruments and the values obtained from the survey responses. A Cronbach coefficient indicating a value of 0 denotes no internal reliability and 1 denotes perfect internal reliability (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2007). According to Pikkarainen et al, (2004), 0.7 is the acceptable reliability coefficient, although lower values are used in some literatures. The Cronbach coefficient obtained in this study was 1.051154. This is shown in Appendix 3. Using a Likert scale of 1-5 denoting Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree for Questions 4 – 24 in the questionnaire responses.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient,

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where:

N = the number of items.

$\bar{c}$  = average covariance between item-pairs.

$\bar{v}$  = average variance.

Variances 1.05 1.57 0.86 0.445 0.62 0.5 0.992 1.588 1.367 1.73 0.3 1.71 1.287 1.01 0.09 1.41 1.02 0.563 0.6 0.48 0.353

#items/questions/components 24  
sum of the item variance 19.55154  
Variance of Total Scores 13930  
Cronbach's alpha 1.051154

Above 0.75 shows internal consistency

The Cronbach coefficient equals 1.05. This shows internal consistency.

## 7.5 Customer complaint

**Table 7.5 - Complaint**

Complaint	Frequency	Percent
Yes	192	98.0
No	4	2.0
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As shown in Table 7.5, of respondents surveyed for this study, 98% indicated they have made one complaint or the other to the mobile phone companies at one time or the other. Only 2% revealed they have not made a complaint. The huge difference indicates the high volume of service delivery issues been faced by customers of all four players in the mobile phone industry in Nigeria. This supports the Nigeria Telecommunication view on service standards in the industry and customer experiences with the mobile phone companies (NCC, 2017).



**Figure 7.4 Customer complaint**

### 7.5.1 Contact method

**Table 7.6 – Contact method**

Method of contact	Frequency	Percent
Telephone	100	51
Fax	0	0
Email	0	0
In Person	96	49
Other	0	0
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

When asked the method of contacting the mobile phone companies, 51 percent of respondents said that they made a phone call while 49 percent indicated they went in person.



**Figure 7.5 Contact method**

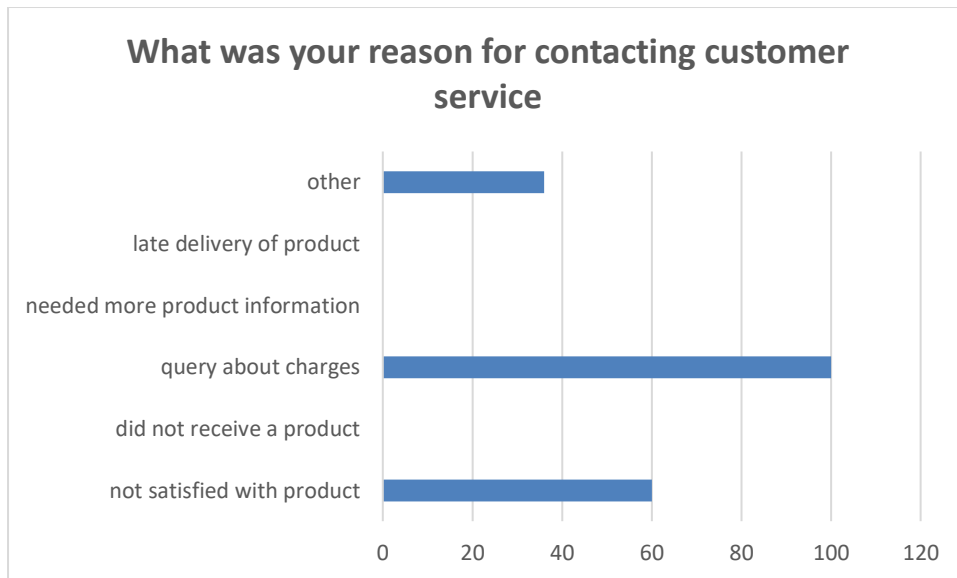
### 7.5.2 Reason for contact

**Table 7.7– Reason for contact**

Reason for contact	Frequency	Percent
Not satisfied with a product	60	30.6
Did not receive a product	0	0.0
Query about charges	100	51.0
Needed more product information	0	0.0
Late delivery of product	0	0.0
Other	36	18.4
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

51 percent of respondents said they contacted the mobile phone companies as a result of a query about charges from the mobile phone suppliers. 30.6 percent reported that their reason for contacting customer service was because they were not satisfied with a product offered to them.



**Figure: 7.6 Reason for contact**

### 7.5.3 Response time to query

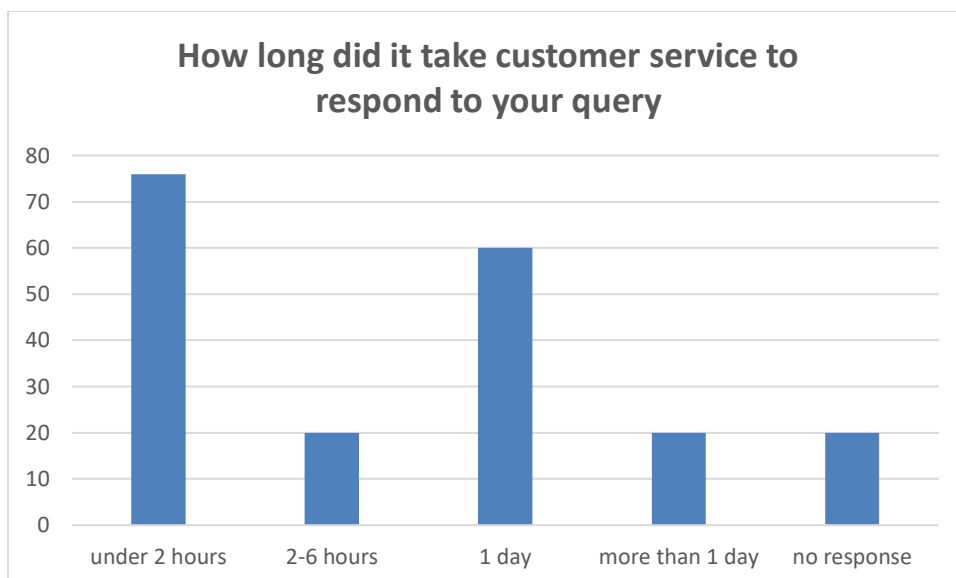
**Table 7.8 – Response Time to query**

Response time (Hours)	Frequency	Percent
Under 2	76	38.8
2-6	20	10.2
24	60	30.6
More than 24	20	10.2
Never replied	20	10.2
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

38.8 percent of the respondents indicated that they received a response on their query under 2 hours while 30.6 percent revealed that the response came in 24 hours.





**Figure 7.7 Response time**

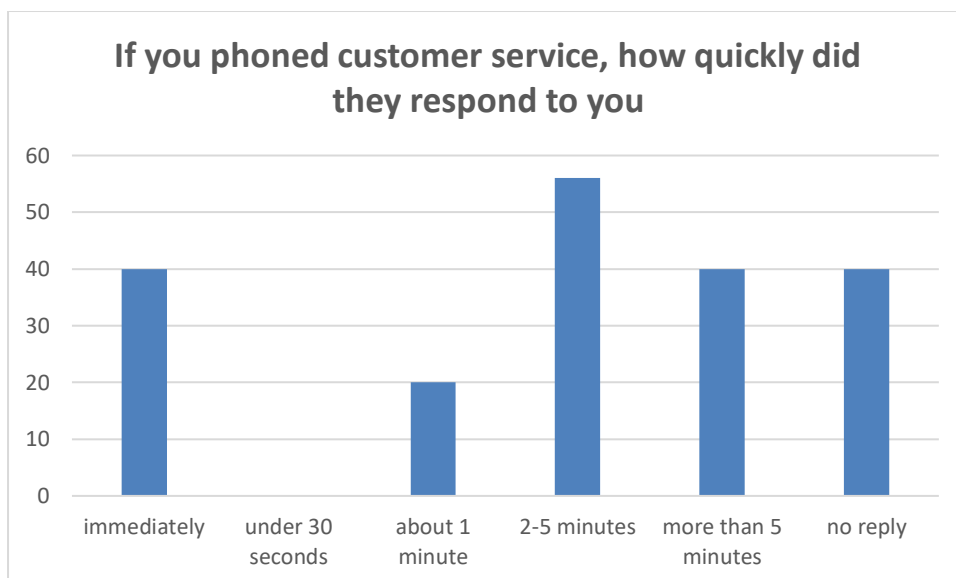
#### **7.5.4 - Customer service response time**

**Table 7.9 – Customer service response time (Phone)**

Customer service response time	Frequency	Percent
Immediately	40	20.4
Under 30 seconds	0	0.0
About 1 minute	20	10.2
2-5 minutes	56	26.6
More than 5 minutes	40	20.4
No reply	40	20.4
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As for the time it took customer service to respond to their query on a phone to a customer service personnel, 26.6 percent of respondents indicated that it took between two to 5 minutes wait on the telephone. 20.4 percent of the respondents revealed that they got no response from the mobile phone companies.



**Figure 7.8 Customer service response time (Phone)**

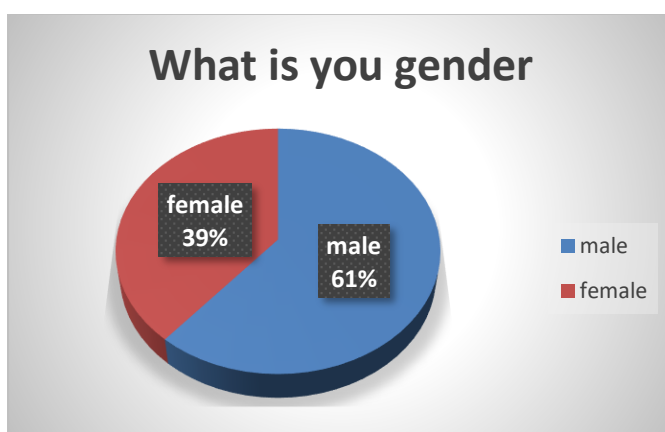
## 7.6 Demographic information

**Table 7.10 – Gender of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	120	61.2
Female	76	38.8
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 62017

As shown in Table 7.10, the gender distribution shows that majority of the respondents (61.2%) are male and 38.8% are female. The difference between the number of male and female users of the mobile phone can be explained by the traditions of Nigerian society where men dominates social and economic sphere (Pyramid research 2016).



**Figure 7.9 Gender of respondents**

### 7.6.1 Age of the Respondents

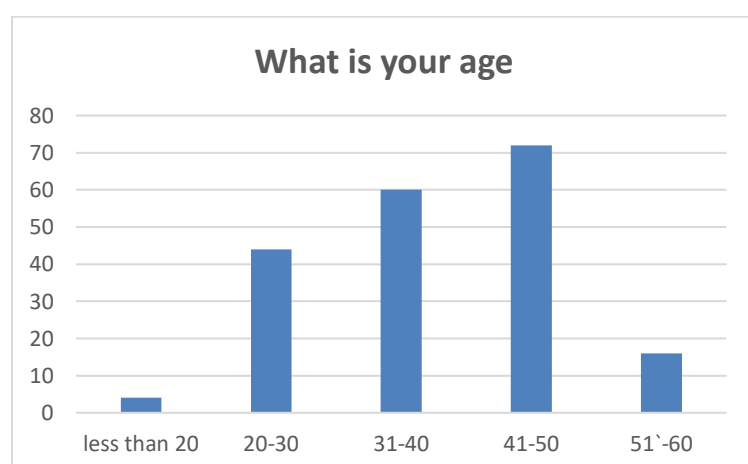
The ages of the customers of the mobile telecoms' companies are presented in Table 7.11 below.

**Table 7.11: Age of respondents**

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent
Less than 20	4	2.0
21-30	44	22.4
31-40	60	30.6
41-50	72	36.7
51-60	16	8.2
More than 60	0	0
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As shown in table 7.11, 30.6% of the respondents are between the ages of Thirty-one and Forty years old and about 22.4% are Twenty-one to Thirty years old. This suggests that the majority (52%) of the mobile phone telecoms customers are young and supports the report of the National Bureau of Statistics (2017), which stated that the population of Nigeria is relatively young with 55 of the country's population are between the fifteen and fifty-five years old. This age constitutes an active labour force in developing countries (Willmore, 2015).



**Figure 7.10 Age of respondents**

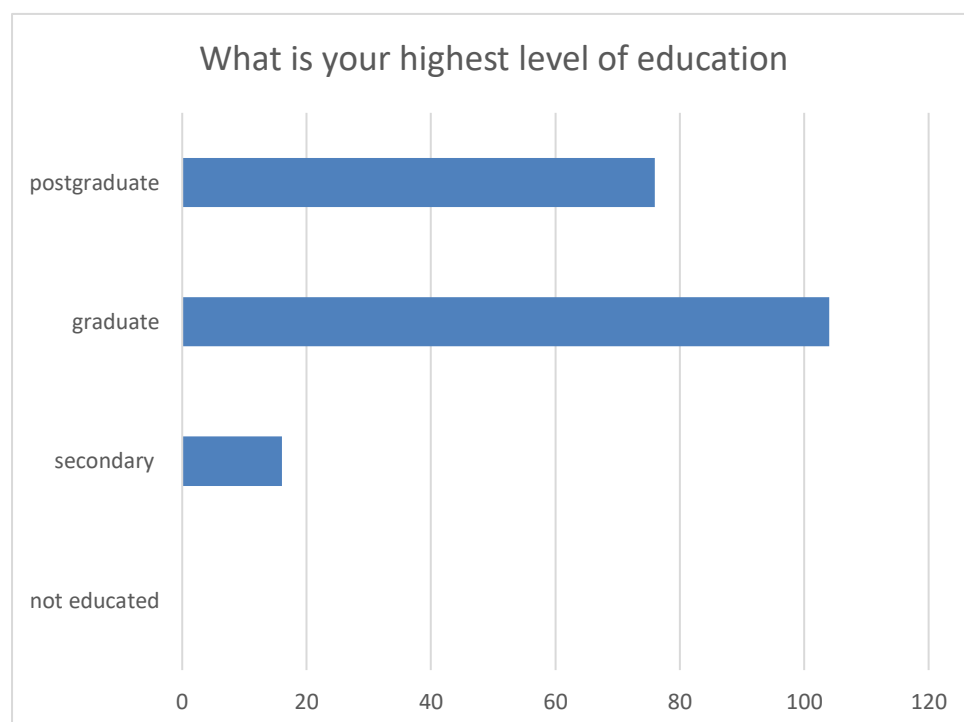
### 7.6.2 Level of education of respondents

**Table 7.12 – Level of education of respondents**

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Not educated	0	0.0
Secondary	16	8.2
Graduate	104	53.1
Postgraduate	76	38.8
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As can be seen in Table 7.12, all the customers of the mobile phone companies in this survey have some form of education. Analysis shows that 53.1% of the study participants are graduates from colleges of higher education, polytechnics and universities, 38.8% have postgraduate level education and 8.2% have secondary level of education. This data demonstrates that the customers of mobile phone companies in Nigeria are educated and are adequately knowledgeable in order to provide data on the level of their engagements between them and their mobile phone providers.



**Figure 7.11 Level of education**

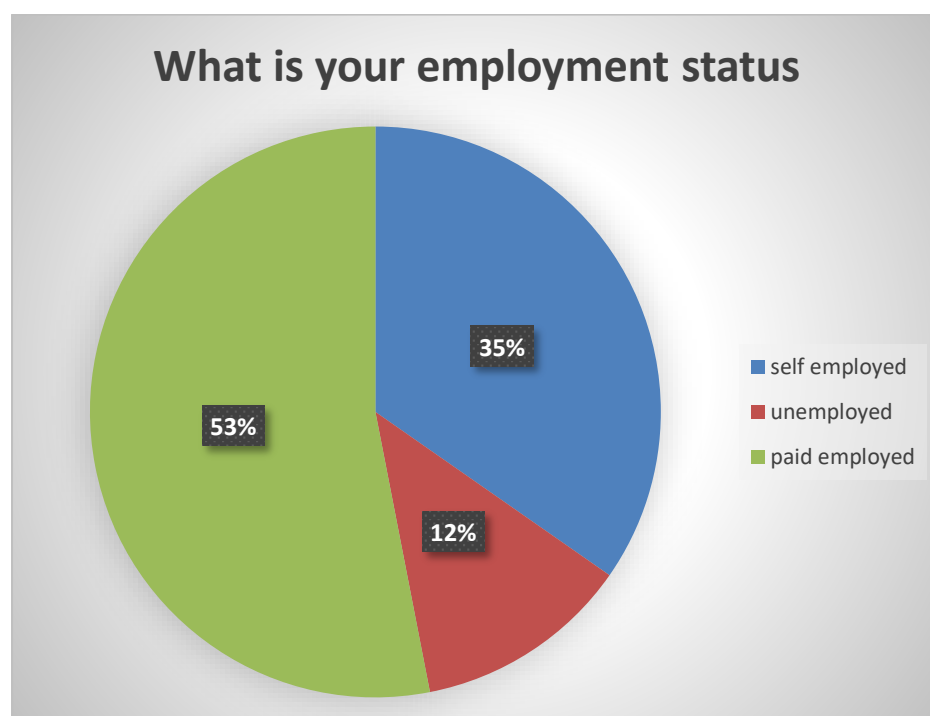
### 7.6.3 Employment status of respondents

**Table 7.13 – Employment status of respondents**

Employment status	Frequency	Percent
Self employed	68	34.6
Unemployed	24	12.4
Paid employed	104	53.0
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As shown in the Table, 53% of respondents surveyed are in paid employment while 34.6 are self-employed with their own businesses with 12.4 indicating they are unemployed. The high level of both the self-employed and paid employed population in the data is indicative of purchasing power such that a great majority (87.6%) can afford services been offered by the mobile telecoms' companies. This is supported by the view of the National bureau of statistics which states that about 34.1% of the Nigerian population are self-employment.



**Figure 7.12 Employment status**

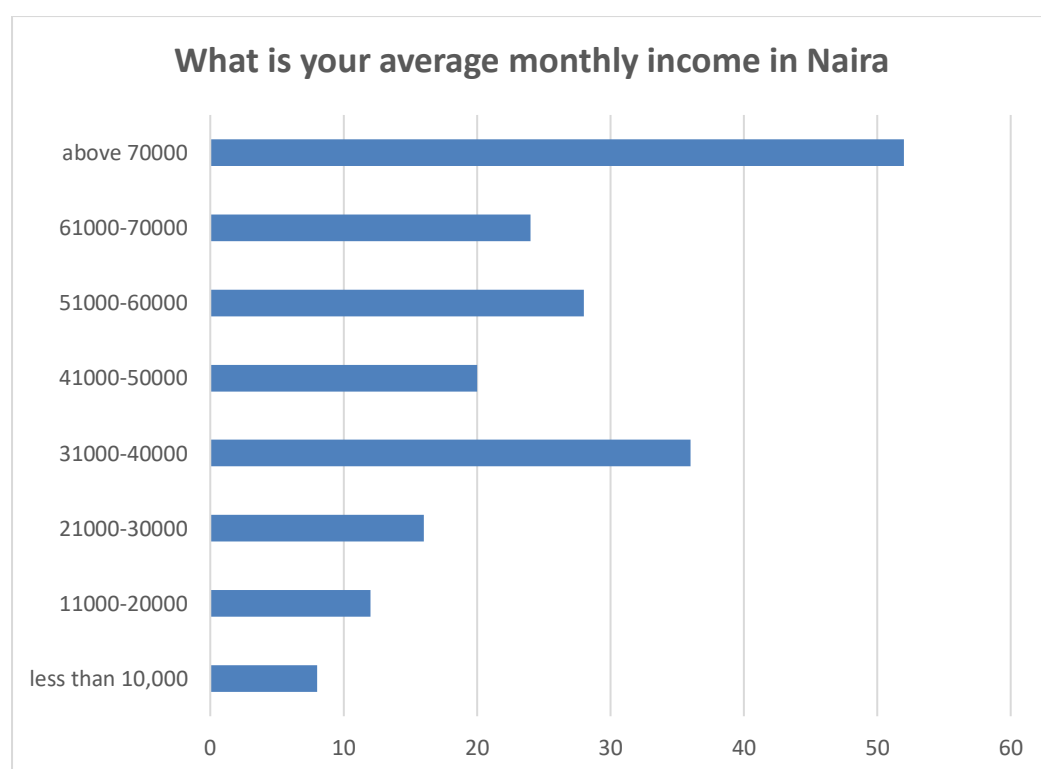
#### 7.6.4 Monthly income of respondents

**Table 7.14 – Monthly income of respondent (Naira)**

Income Level (naira)	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10,000	8	4.1
11,000 – 20,000	12	6.1
21,000 - 30,000	10	5.1
31,000 - 40,000	36	18.4
41,000 - 50,000	20	10.2
51,000 - 60,000	28	14.3
61,000 - 70,000	24	12.2
71,000 above	52	26.5
Total	196	100

Source: Field survey, 2017

As seen in Table 7.14, 26.5% of the respondents in this survey earn above 71,000 naira monthly with only 4.1% earning less than 10,000 naira. The data shows that over 87.7% of customers surveyed in this study earn above the national minimum wage in Nigeria which is 18,000 naira monthly for workers. This explains why majority of Nigerians can afford the services provided by the mobile phone companies.



**Figure 7.13 Income level**

## **7.7 Summary of chapter**

This chapter analysed participants response to the field study to provide quantitative support to the qualitative analysis presented in sessions. In addition, this chapter provided a profile of 15 Executives and 196 customers of the four major telecoms businesses in Nigeria through using both qualitative and quantitative measures relating to the research objectives. In the next chapter, the implications of the study with regards to its contributions to knowledge is presented in order to draw theoretical, conceptual and practical conclusions of the study and suggestions for future research will be discussed.

## **Chapter Eight – Conclusion, implication, limitation and suggestion for further research**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In Chapter one, the study was introduced, background of the study was outlined, and issues which relates to consumers in the Nigeria mobile telecommunication analysed. The study aims, research question and objectives were also highlighted. Chapter presented the setting and context of this study. It showed the political, economic and socio-demographic overview of Nigeria. It also highlights the historical background and development of the Nigerian telecoms industry.

Chapter three showed the scope of the study and literature engaged, which includes firms` and consumer customer engagement with justifications. Furthermore, it expatiates on key adopted theories with definitions of key theoretical constructs and review of related empirical studies in the fields of customer engagement with key points of departures that were found from literature. This was followed by Chapter four in which the conceptual foundations of the study were established, and the conceptual framework illustrated. Chapter five is about the research methodology. It outlined the philosophical foundation of the study by specifically looking into the ontological and epistemological issues and further rationalised its choice of qualitative and quantitative research design. Chapters six and seven showed a detailed presentation of the data, analysis and discussion of the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of research findings.

Chapters two and three dealt with the relevant literature of the study, and discussed the conceptualisation of the literature reviewed, while Chapters six and seven provided a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the research findings. The combination of chapters that dealt with the literature reviewed, qualitative and quantitative analysis reveals the link between the theoretical, qualitative and quantitative studies and describes the relationship between the key concepts of this study: customer engagement by the telecom's businesses and the relationship to business performance. This chapter discusses the conclusions of this study and is structured as follows. Section 8.2 presents a summary to the key findings and implication of the study. Section 8.3 evaluates the implications of the study with regards to contribution



to knowledge. Section 8.4 identifies suggestions for future research. Section 8.5 presents a summary to the chapter.

## **8.2 Conclusion of Study and Implications**

The results of this research show that the level of customer engagement and efficiency of the mobile telecoms company in Nigeria has a favourable and substantial connection. The impact, however, is not triggered by the lack of mobile telecommunications companies customer complaints.

The findings of this research have shown that customer engagement helps a business concentrate on a particular type of relationship that builds a powerful customer-company connection. It has countless benefits promoting a brand, enhancing customer perception, and enhancing company profitability. The research has shown that the business and customers has a two-way communication. From the perspective of the companies, the research has shown that customer engagement is one of the key strategy of attaining lasting customer connection. It also shows the vital significance of customer engagement in marketing, understanding nature of company-customer relationship and properly managing it.

This research showed that customer commitment is managed to identify, acquire, satisfy and retain lucrative customers. This research also shows two main advantages for businesses in the mobile telecom industry in Nigeria from customer engagement. First, customer engagement is a tool for lowering marketing costs and better understanding of the customer. In addition, the research shows that improved customer insight leads to increased customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and company efficiency.

This research has shown from the customer's point of view that customer engagement has a beneficial impact on long term relational advancements. The research demonstrates that besides decreasing perceived misgivings, customer engagement explains why customers are interested in building a business relationship with firms in terms of recognition, customization, authority, status, loyalty and membership. These intentions refer respectively to the feeling of being valued by customers, being understood about their particular expectations, needs, sense of authority all of which are a consequence of the partnership. It also impacts on improving the position of the

customers and meeting their social requirements. Retention of customers is a significant component of customer engagement management. Customer engagement is one the most cost-effective beneficial approaches for improving business efficiency. This research also demonstrates that customer engagement positively affects sales and profit.

Finally, the outcome of this research showed that the theoretical origins of the notion of customer engagement lie in the extended marketing partnership. The research emphasizes customer engagement as a customer centred focus by the mobile telecoms companies and the interactive experiences of the customer that take place in complicated, competitive market settings. From the marketing strategy perspective, this research demonstrates customer engagement in two streams. These are marketing strategies that are both offensive and defensive. Offensive strategies involve these actions aimed at attracting extra customers, reducing the frequency of purchases and promoting brand switching, while defensive strategies are aimed at reducing customer exit.

The primary objective of this study was to explore the development of customer engagement in Nigeria's mobile telecom industry. It is to investigate customer interactions as a background for the creation of customer experience and to determine whether the form of the customer engagement with their mobile suppliers impacts or predicts the type and level of business results.

The study's first objective was:

`To investigate the formation of customer engagement in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria`.

This objective was achieved using the relevant literature to develop the conceptual framework and by using two different theories; Consumer behaviour relationship theory and the Service-Dominant theory to construct a research model; this was empirically tested to confirm the validity and reliability of the variables.

The study's second objective was:

`To explore customer relationships as an antecedent for customer engagement formation`.

This objective was accomplished as the outcomes of the statistical and qualitative analysis showed that enhanced customer engagement presented company possibilities that facilitated customer retention, loyalty, feedback, and innovation.

The study's third objective was:

'To Determine whether the engagement firms form with mobile providers impacts or predicts the type or level of performance.'

This objective was accomplished by theoretically and empirically showing that increased customer engagement by mobile telecommunications companies is substantially linked to increased company performance.

### **8.3 Contributions of study**

#### **Academic/Theoretical Contribution**

To provide a comprehensive knowledge of why and how customer engagement takes place in the Nigerian mobile telecoms industry, this study investigated the issue of customer engagement through the implementation of the customer relationship management behaviour theory and the service-dominant theory (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014). The gap found in the literature is the lack of appropriate literature in a developing economy such as Nigeria on customer engagement-based studies. (Bennani and Osarenkhoe, 2007).

Some studies conducted in the industry discussed characteristics and antecedents in terms of customer satisfaction and retention. Additionally, other studies indicate some basic weaknesses in the network traffic, and infrastructure problems that are responsible for most of the adverse market perception and obvious discontent among customers. What is lacking in the literature is investigating the management of their customers by mobile firms; and exploring the relationships that have been established and the impact on company results.

The majority of previous studies of customer engagement in the mobile telecom industry in Nigeria have failed to provide a solid theoretical and practical justification that explains the firm's relationship with their customers from an economic perspective. That is because business performance in the context of customer engagement occurs in a situation where a customer is influenced by a variety of pre and post purchase factors (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014).

In order to provide a complete understanding of why and how customer engagement in the Nigeria mobile telecom industry, this study fill this gap in literature by providing a theoretical framework that gives a full picture of pre and post purchase relationship in a supplier-buyer context. It also includes both how pre and post purchase activities setting is manipulated or prepared and what potential utility increases the possibility of the customer being involved in long term relationship and repeat purchase.

Previous studies failed to explain the creation, nurture and building of company-customer relationships from a customer perspective. This study provides a framework that explains the role of the customers in customer engagement from a clearly defined customer perspective. Similarly, this study focuses on the evolving role of customer engagement in a developing country's mobile telecom businesses. It explores whether there is a connection between mobile telecoms companies, and their customers. The conceptual framework (Figure 4.1) developed is a contribution to academic knowledge measurable constructs which can assist in the development of further study frames in the relationship marketing literature.

### **Practical Contribution**

Some studies carried out in the industry have addressed attributes and antecedents in aspects of customer satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, other studies suggests some fundamental weaknesses in the mobile telecoms industry bothering on network traffic and infrastructure problems. These are critical issues responsible for most of the negative perception in the market and apparent discontent among Nigerian mobile telecom consumers (Olatokun and Ojo, 2014). What is lacking from the literature is the investigation of mobile firms` management of their customers; an exploration of the relationships formed and an understanding of customers` perspective by managers and practitioners of the mobile companies and how it influence their overall business performance. Similarly, there is a lack of research work which has

adequately harmonized both company-customer perspectives and subsequent impact on each other.

First, the study appraised the management of the mobile telecoms customers by the mobile phone companies. It identified some of the pre-purchase and post-purchase behaviour that can improve performance in a business-to-customer association within the context of a developing economy like Nigeria. This will be handy for managers and practitioners of the mobile phone companies.

Second, the study drew inference from global best practices in the industry providing a common ground that can be useful for further research and exploration in the field. It proffers a clear application of efficient customer engagement tactics in a supplier-customer relationship. This contribution will enhance managerial practice for increased performance in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria. This contribution will also be applicable to similar developing economies as well as advanced countries.

Third, in the context of a supplier-customer relationship, this study will provide a clear implementation of effective customer engagement strategies. It will fill the gap in the current literature and add expertise to organisational practice for enhanced results not only in Nigeria but in other developing and developed countries.

#### **8.4 Limitations of study and suggestions for further research**

In relationship marketing research there are several engagement-related concepts including community engagement, brand engagement, customer engagement. Furthermore, in the literature reviewed in this study, customer engagement was regarded as an interactive experience with an item. The second observation has to do with the resemblance between customer engagement, brand engagement and consumer engagement, although they have been marked differently. There is a comparable conceptual scope for these distinct ideas.

This study primarily tries to identify customer involvement in a particular context. The aim of this research is to conceptualize and differentiate the notion of customer engagement from other associated ideas such as involvement, communication, and participation. The other significant observation to make about these studies is that both qualitative and quantitative kinds of research have concluded that customer engagement is a multi-dimensional construct. The significant restriction of customer

engagement in this study is the absence of awareness of the interactive experiences of the customer that inform their particular behaviour in coping with the business settings of the mobile telecom companies.

Further research in this area is needed to examine a bigger sample of customers in order to generalize results. In particular, the building of customer engagement lacks a reliable and valid scale. To adopt a working definition, the present study evaluated a number of studies, however the establishment of a valid scale to measure customer engagement is essential to achieve a suitable definition. This aspect can be examined in future studies.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Interview Questions**

1. Which communication methods do you normally use most to contact your customers and how do you evaluate their feedback.
2. How do you choose the locations of your shops or points of customer contacts and sales outlets.
3. To what extent do you exert efforts to enhance your store`s atmosphere, design, colour, and other internal environment elements for customers.
4. How do you design your purchasing processes via both online and direct sales outlets.
5. What are some of the frequent problems that you experience in dealing with your customers.
6. How do the experience of managers and other customer service staff enhance the offerings of your products and services.
7. Based on your experience, what would you say are the main products and services required by customers.
8. What distinguishes your organisation from other mobile telephone companies.
9. How do you keep an eye on enhancing your product and services you offer gain customers` compared to that of competitors.
10. Can you explain how network coverage affects customers` choice of mobile operators.
11. What are the main products and services provided by your organisation
12. How do you enhance the services offered to your customer.
13. How do you design your offers in terms of calling plan, calling airtime, messaging and data.
14. What are the procedures by which you measure, enhance, and expand brand name and image positions in consumer`s minds.
15. How do you see your brand expanding over the coming years.
16. How does your firm assess customers` satisfaction and attitudes towards the firm and its offerings.
17. What are the main obstacles to achieving high levels of communication with your customers.



18. Do your customers have any complaints regarding your products and services.
19. What types of negative feedback does your organisation get from customers or competitors.
20. How do your company measure and assess customers` reactions and feedback.

## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire – Customers of the Mobile Firms

My name is Anthony Agbonasevbaefe. I am a PhD student at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. This research is being conducted to study customer engagement in the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria. This study is purely for academic research purposes and anonymous. Please answer the questions based upon your personal experience. Your frank answer to each of the questions below will be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for your time and effort.

#### Section 1: Information about Mobile Telecom firm

##### Q1. Who is your current mobile phone service supplier?

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airtel                     | <input type="checkbox"/> MTN      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glo Mobile                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Etisalat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify..... |                                   |

##### Q2. How long have you used your current mobile phone service provider?

- |                    |                          |         |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Less than one year | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 -2yrs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3-4yrs             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5-6yrs  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7-8yrs             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9-10yrs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 -12yrs          | <input type="checkbox"/> | >12yrs  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

##### Q3. Who pays for your use of mobile telecoms services?

- |         |                          |          |                          |
|---------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Me      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Employer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |                          |

Others- please specify.....

## Section 2: How would you assess your mobile telecom operator service delivery?

Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with the statements  
Please mark only **ONE** response per statement.

Attributes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q4. Friendliness					
Q5. Respond quickly to customer concerns					
Q6. Knowledge of customer service by staff					
Q7. Teamwork is practiced					
Q8. There is effective staff communication					
Q9. Staff motivation is high					
Q10. Performance rating					

**Section 3: Factors that influence your choice of mobile phone operator.**

Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with the statements

Please mark only **ONE** response per statement.

ATTRIBUTE	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q11. Free evening/night calling					
Q12. Mobile internet offers					
Q13. Mobile shops availability					
Q14. Mobile phone shop`s atmosphere, design.					
Q15. Seeing and testing the actual product and service inside the mobile shop.					
Q16. Mobile supplier`s online shops availability					
Q17. There is quick online purchase.					
Q18. There is quick shop purchase.					
Q19. There is affordable plan.					

### Rating your mobile operator performance on relationship drivers?

Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with the statements  
Please mark only **ONE** response per statement.

Relationship drivers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q20. Quality					
Q21. Price					
Q22. Product					
Q23. Customer service					
Q24. Technical support					

### Section 4:

Q25. Have you ever had cause to make a complaint? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q26. In what way did you contact customer service?

Telephone ☐ Fax ☐ Email ☐ In Person ☐ Other ☐

If other, please specify.....

Q27. How long did it take customer service to respond to your query?

Under 2 hours ☐ 2-6 hours ☐ 1 business day ☐  
More than 1 business day ☐ never replied ☐

Q28. What was your reason for contacting customer service?

Not satisfied with a product	<input type="checkbox"/>	did not receive a product	<input type="checkbox"/>
Query about charges	<input type="checkbox"/>	needed more product information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Late delivery of product	<input type="checkbox"/>	other (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q29. If you phoned customer service, how quickly did they respond to you?**

Immediately	<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 30 seconds	<input type="checkbox"/>	About 1 minute	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-5 minute	<input type="checkbox"/>	more than 5 minute	<input type="checkbox"/>	No reply	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section 5:**

**GENERIC INFORMATION – PLEASE COMPLETE (Tick appropriate box)**

**Q30. What is your gender?**

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Q31. What is your age? (Years)**

≤20	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 -40	<input type="checkbox"/>	41 -50	<input type="checkbox"/>
51 -60	<input type="checkbox"/>	>60	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q32. What is your highest level of education?**

Not educated	<input type="checkbox"/>	School level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate level	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post-graduate level	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q33. What is your occupation?**

Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paid employed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Q34. What is your average monthly income? (Naira)**

Less than 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	10,001 -20,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
20,001 - 30,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	30,001 - 40,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
40,001 -50,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	50,0001 - 60,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
60,001 -70,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	>70,001	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Thank you for taking part in this survey.**

### Appendix 3: Table of reliability measure

Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Total
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	84
4	5	2	3	4	4	4	1	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	77
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	1	2	4	4	4	81
1	1	2	3	2	2	1	5	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	60
2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	4	5	5	2	4	2	4	2	4	3	3	4	3	65
2	2	2	3	3	3	3	5	1	1	4	1	1	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	59
4	4	4	3	3	3	3	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	69
4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	1	4	4	3	3	3	68
2	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	67
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4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	83
2	1	3	3	3	3	4	1	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	70
3	4	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	1	2	4	4	4	73
2	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	77
3	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	5	5	2	4	2	4	2	4	3	3	4	3	77
4	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	1	1	4	1	1	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	68
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	73
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4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	78
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4	5	2	3	4	4	4	5	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	74
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2	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	1	1	4	1	1	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	70
3	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	74
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2	4	4	4	5	5	5	3	5	3	3	1	2	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	74

The Cronbach alpha coefficient,

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where:

N = the number of items.

$\bar{c}$  = average covariance between item-pairs.

$\bar{v}$  = average variance.

Variances 1.05 1.57 0.86 0.445 0.62 0.5 0.992 1.588 1.367 1.73 0.3 1.71 1.287 1.01 0.09 1.41 1.02 0.563 0.6 0.48 0.353

#items/questions/components	24
sum of the item variance	19.55154
Variance of Total Scores	13930
Cronbach's alpha	<b>1.051154</b>

Above 0.75 shows internal consistency

The Cronbach coefficient equals 1.05. This shows internal consistency.